Partnership and collaboration in sport: a study in the context of the New Opportunities for PE and Sport programme in three English cities

Partnership and Collaboration in Sport: A Study in the Context of the New Opportunities for PE and Sport Programme in three English cities

by

Iain Alastair Lindsey

Doctoral Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of
Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University
March 2008

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINALITY

This is to certify that I am responsible for the work submitted in this thesis, that the original work is my own except as specified in acknowledgments or in footnotes, and that neither the thesis nor the original work contained therein has been submitted to this or any other institution for a degree.

…… (Signed)

…… (Date)

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Barrie Houlihan, for his unstinting support for this piece of work. I will always appreciate the contribution that Barrie has made through providing valuable insight and constructive criticism, always combined with trademark humour and kindness. Thank you.

I would also like to thank all my colleagues at the Institute of Youth Sport. During my time in the IYS, Dr Mary Nevill and Dr Tess Kay were always incredibly supportive of me and, beyond this piece of work, I value hugely the opportunities that they opened up for me. In addition, I would use this opportunity to offer particular thanks to my colleague Ruth Jeanes who never failed to enliven my time at the IYS, was a tremendous companion on a number of trips and always understood when I moaned about the travails of undertaking a part-time PhD!

Beyond work, I would like to thank all my family and friends who, often without being aware of it, have helped me while I have been undertaking this study. In particular, Hannah's support, understanding and enthusiasm have been incredibly precious to me. Lastly, it is only because my parents provided an environment for me which both valued education for its own sake and enabled me to freely follow my aspirations that I could have ever dreamed of starting, let alone completing, a piece of work such as this.

Table of Contents

List of Tables and Figures

Abstract

Tett et al. (2003, p38) state that ‘themes of collaboration and partnership … are at the centre of New Labour’s vision of a modernised welfare state’. Concomitant with this government focus, the quantity of research on partnership and collaboration has expanded rapidly. However, there have been few studies of these types of relationships in the field of PE, school and community sport. In order to begin to address this gap, this study examined partnership and collaboration in the context of the New Opportunities of PE and Sport (NOPES) programme. The study was underpinned by a variety of theoretical concepts included those, such as policy networks, that may be specifically related to partnerships and collaboration as well as others, such as governmentality, that are more generic. Within three case studies of specific local authority areas, interview data from stakeholders in the NOPES programme was combined with documentary evidence where available. Cross-case analysis identified a variety of complex forms of partnership and collaboration both within the NOPES programme itself and its wider context. These different partnerships and collaborations all had an effect on the NOPES policy process in the respective case studies but in varied ways according to their different forms and the agencies involved. As a result of these findings, a number of implications for future policy related to partnership and collaboration were identified. In particular, it was suggested that a more nuanced policy approach based on an understanding of the complexities of partnerships and collaboration should be adopted. The findings also stimulated suggestions for theoretical development, especially of the policy networks concept, and for future research both in the context of sport and other policy areas.

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Partnership and Collaboration

This thesis examines partnership and collaboration across and within PE, school and community sport. In the wider public realm, Tett et al. (2003, p38) state that:

> *themes of collaboration and partnership … are at the centre of New Labour's vision of a modernised welfare state*

Although the degree to which partnership and collaboration represent new forms of organisation within and beyond the state is contested (Whitehead, 2007), there is no doubting their prominence in political discourse and practice in the early 21st century. For example, McDonald (2005, p581) identifies an 'almost messianic drive for partnership working' by the Blair government.

The promotion of partnership and collaboration by government is underpinned by a variety of beliefs regarding their potential benefits. For one, partnership and collaboration are seen to address problems associated with fragmentation that were created by the process of hollowing-out of the state in the 1980s and early 1990s (Skelcher, 2000). In doing so, partnership and collaboration may avoid duplication between agencies within and external to the state, promote co-operation between these same agencies and offer opportunities to achieve outcomes beyond any single agency working in isolation. These aspirations are bound up in the Blair government's oft repeated desire for 'joined-up government'. As a more general political ideal, partnership and collaboration may also offer 'keys to a more open public and private sector' (Whitehead, 2007, p7).

As a result of these beliefs, partnership forms and collaborative practice have proliferated at all levels of the state in the United Kingdom. 'Joined-up'

government has been promoted across central government departments. Partnership structures have both been superimposed on local government and adopted within its constituent parts. Initiatives have prompted partnerships to be developed in local communities as well as at specific local sites including schools. Central government policies and funding have also been used to initiate partnerships as well as cajole, compel and co-opt specific agencies to contribute to partnerships and collaborative arrangements (Skelcher, 2000).

Similarly, partnership and collaboration have been promoted across a multitude of policy fields including education, community development and sport. With regard to the focus of this study, government strategy documents such as *A Sporting Future for All* (DCMS, 2000) and *Game Plan* (DCMS / Strategy Unit, 2002) have consistently advocated the development of partnerships as part of the 'modernisation' of the sporting infrastructure in England. Furthermore, Sport England (2004, p18), in its own major strategy document *The Framework for Sport in England*, recognises that 'Game plan called for reform … and the creation of effective partnerships at every level to deliver for and through sport'. As such this document calls for partnerships to be developed which would have a role in strategy development, delivery of sporting opportunities and 'joining-up' sport with agencies in other fields such as health.

As stated earlier, partnership and collaboration has been encouraged through particular programmes developed by government and other public bodies. Of particular relevance to this study, one of the major distributors of National Lottery money, the New Opportunities Fund, stated in its mission and values that

> *We value and support effective partnership working. We aim to support and work with partnerships where they exist and facilitate information sharing and best practice to enable new partnerships to form.*
>
> (NOF, 2001, p24)

In 2001, the government directed the New Opportunities Fund to invest £751 million across the UK into the New Opportunities for PE and Sport (NOPES) programme which was to build and renovate sports facilities for school and community use. In keeping with the focus of government and the New Opportunities Fund, partnership was central to the development and delivery of the NOPES programme. This focus was demonstrated by an early statement within the Fund's guidance notes for the NOPES programme: 'although LEAs will act as Lead Organisations, grant schemes will only receive funding if they involve a range of partners' (NOF, 2001, p3)

Concomitant with the focus of government policy, there has been a large increase in the academic research and literature on partnership and collaboration. A number of different theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of partnership and collaboration have been suggested and utilised in the literature (for a fuller consideration of different approaches see Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002). Among the theoretical concepts that have been used to analyse specific partnerships and collaborative arrangements are policy networks (e.g. Damgaard, 2006; Cloke, Milbourne & Widdowfield, 2000) and regime theory (e.g. Lawless, 1994). Other authors have attempted to locate partnership and collaboration in terms of modes of co-ordination (e.g. Entwhistle, 2007; Whitehead, 2007) or new modes of governance (e.g. Teisman & Klijn, 2002). These theoretical concepts will all be utilised in this study.

Other authors have proposed new conceptual frameworks for the study of partnership and collaboration. For example, McDonald (2005) uses Habermas' theory of communicative action to synthesise a new model of partnership governance. Other less theoretically informed attempts to categorise partnerships include MacKintosh's (1992) classification based on synergy, influence and resource acquisition and Tett et al.'s (2003, p39) 'heuristic continuum' between 'individuals in one organisation working with other individuals in another organisation' to 'many organisations working together in harmony'. Due to the proven utility and longevity of the

theoretical concepts identified in the previous paragraph, new conceptual frameworks will, at most, be used tangentially in this study. Due to its focus on the relationships between, and actions of, agents within collaborative arrangements, the theory of collaborative advantage that has been inductively derived by Huxham & Vangen (2005) will be utilised in this study. This theory is especially relevant to this study as it offers a balance to the more structural focus of the policy networks concept and regime theory.

Other studies of partnership and collaboration have had a less theoretical approach, instead focusing on factors that enable effective partnership working or identifying deficiencies in the application of partnerships as a new mode of governance. Synthesising existing research, academic and non-academic authors have produced guides to effective partnership working (e.g. Markwell et al., 2003; Audit Commission, 1998). While such works have much in common with the theory of collaborative advantage, they lack the depth and comprehensiveness of this particular theory. Counter to these largely positive accounts of partnership and collaboration, other authors offer a more critical perspective. Rummery (2006) identifies three distinct critiques of partnership in the literature relating to queries of the democratic accountability and responsiveness of partnerships, the clarity of definitional terms applied to partnerships and reservations about the extent to which partnerships are more effective and efficient mechanisms to achieve particular outcomes. The second and third of these critiques will be particularly relevant to this study. Furthermore, Whitehead's (2007, p4) assertion that studies of partnership have focused on their formation and outputs while 'internal politics which shape the operations and effectiveness of partnership working have been routinely ignored' is also significant to the purpose and methodology of this study.

Another important lacuna addressed by this study is the lack of published research on partnership and collaboration in PE, school and community sport. In fact, tangential to this thesis and also utilising data from the national evaluation of the NOPES programme, Lindsey (2006) offers the only empirically-based analysis to have a specific focus on partnerships in

PE, school or community sport in the United Kingdom. The article examines forms of partnership in a wider variety of case studies than this thesis to evaluate their impact on selection of NOPES projects in local authority areas. Other authors such as Houlihan (2000), Flintoff (2003) and McDonald (2005) have presented empirical evidence on partnerships in PE and sport as part of broader studies.

1.2 The Study

The previous section has outlined how, despite the importance of partnership and collaboration in modern governance, there remain weaknesses in empirical research that considers such relationships, especially in the field of PE, school and community sport. Utilising the NOPES programme as a focus, this study seeks to build on existing research whilst also addressing some of the weaknesses identified.

As stated previously, partnership and collaboration were central to the NOPES programme. In particular, all local authorities (with responsibility for education) in the United Kingdom were required by the New Opportunities Fund to form partnerships that would develop the NOPES programme in their areas. Among the tasks that these partnerships were expected (and hoped) to undertake were to decide the projects to be funded from their allocation of NOPES funding, manage the process of writing funding applications for NOPES projects and oversee the NOPES programme in their local area through design and construction phases and beyond. Furthermore, partnerships were also expected to be developed at individual NOPES projects based at schools, leisure centres, outdoor adventure facilities and other sites.

Given this programmatic context, the overall purpose of this study is to answer the following two research questions:

> **What forms of local partnership and collaboration are developed for, and connected to, the New Opportunities for PE and Sport programme?**
>
> **How do these partnerships and collaborative arrangements influence the local policy process and outputs within the New Opportunities for PE and Sport programme?**

The terms policy process, outputs and outcomes are often used in slightly different ways in academic literature (for example, see Chapter Three in relation to policy networks). Therefore, it is necessary at this point to provide clarity on the way these terms are interpreted in relation to the second research question in order to be precise about the scope of the study. In the context of this study, the phrase ‘policy process and outputs’ is taken to encompass the process of developing and enacting policies as well as the immediate results of these processes. Conversely, the ultimate impact of these policy processes and outputs will be beyond the scope of this study. By way of an explanatory example, the study will examine the process of selecting NOPES projects and the results of this process (the actual projects selected) but will not consider the impact of these facilities, for example, on quantity and quality of PE and school sport.

There also needs to be clarity on other specific issues to be considered in attempting to answer these research questions. Key issues to be investigated are:

- the structural form of partnerships developed within local authority areas for the NOPES programme, as well as relationships and operational processes within these partnerships
- the influence of central government and the New Opportunities Fund on these local partnerships
- how NOPES partnerships relate to other structures and collaborative arrangements in the local context of PE, school and community sport
- the influence of the structural form of local partnerships, members of these partnerships (both collectively and individually) and the wider collaborative context on local policy development and implementation for the NOPES programme
- the influence of these aspects of partnership and collaboration on individual projects in the NOPES programme.

Given these research questions and more detailed issues to be examined, the study will not only contribute to the literature on partnership and collaboration but will identify relevant issues for future policy and practice in PE, school and community sport for a variety of stakeholders. For government and other central agencies, the study will identify the extent to which their aspirations for local partnerships are met and the efficacy of the tools used to promote desired forms of partnership. For local stakeholders, the study will identify ways in which partnership and collaboration supports and constrains efforts to achieve desired outcomes. Finally, the study will identify ways that individual organisations, such as schools, can engage in partnership and collaboration to influence the policy process in their local area.

As suggested in the previous section, the study will be underpinned by a broad range of theoretical concepts. Theories of state will provide a basis for the study by highlighting different aspects of the relationship between the state and society. Building on these theories, the concepts of power, modes of co-ordination, governance and governmentality will offer a general

descriptive and analytical underpinning for analysis of partnership, collaboration and the policy process in the local context of this study. The policy networks concept and regime theory will be used to analyse the specific forms of partnership and collaboration found in this local context whilst also enabling an examination of how these forms influence the development and implementation of policy. Complementing this, theory regarding collaborative advantage will be used to illuminate practices within partnership and collaboration. Rather than narrowing the focus of the study by limiting its theoretical underpinnings, this broad approach will, it is hoped, provide sufficient analytical tools to examine the multi-faceted nature of partnership and collaboration as well as address the range of issues identified above. Adopting a broad theoretical base will also allow an assessment of the utility of a variety of concepts to the study of partnership and collaboration in PE, school and community sport.

Methodologically, the study is based on an ontological and epistemological position drawn from critical realism. This position reflects and matches the study's aims of not only investigating behaviour within partnerships and collaborative arrangements but also examining the effects of these and other structures on processes within them. Underpinned by the critical realist ontology and epistemology, the study utilises a multiple case study approach within three local authority areas. Adopting this approach allows for the key issues identified above to be studied in depth in each case as well as offering the potential for cross-case analysis.

In order to provide the depth of data required within the case studies, a qualitative approach is adopted. Individual and group semi-structured interviews will be the primary source of data for the study. The structure of interviews as well as the analysis of data from them is informed by the theoretical concepts described above. The selection of interviewees in each case combines both purposive and snowball sampling. Documentary analysis is also used to triangulate interview data and provide an additional perspective on partnership, collaboration and policy processes. This

research strategy shares much in common with other studies of partnership and collaboration.

It is appropriate to conclude this section with a clear statement regarding a major methodological issue associated with this study. This issue pertains to the link between this study and the concurrent national evaluation of the NOPES programme. While the ontological and epistemological position adopted was particular to this study, some of the data collected was used both to answer the research questions underpinning this study as well as for the national evaluation. This overlap pertains only to particular interviews (which are identified in Appendix A) and, from these interviews, certain data were used specifically for this study, certain data were used specifically for the national evaluation while other data were used for both purposes. Other researchers involved in the national evaluation were also present at some of these interviews, although the author was the lead interviewer in all cases. Further information regarding the relationship between this study and the national evaluation of the NOPES programme, as well as the implications of this relationship, is provided in Chapter Four.

1.3 Structure of the Thesis

The structure of the remainder of the thesis is as follows. The examination of central government policies and programmes in Chapter Two sets the study, and the research questions, in a wider context. The first half of the chapter focuses on policies related to the nature, role and scope of the British state. In these sections, a historical approach is adopted in tracing the development of such policies from the post-war social democratic consensus, through the period of Conservative government under Thatcher and Major to the New Labour government of Tony Blair. Within the sections on each of these historical periods, not only are generic policies considered, but also those policies related to three particular sectors, namely: education, sport and community development. The penultimate section of the chapter has a narrower focus on the National Lottery and introduces the programme

that is the focus of this study: the NOPES programme. In doing so, links are drawn with the themes identified in the earlier sections of the chapter.

The theoretical basis of the study is presented in Chapter Three. In the opening section of the chapter, a number of descriptive and analytic concepts that may support the examination of partnerships, collaboration and the policy process are considered. Concepts described in this section are power, modes of co-ordination, governance and governmentality. The chapter continues with a detailed review of concepts that can be specifically used to examine partnerships and collaborative arrangements. In particular, the concepts covered in this section are policy networks, regime theory and theory regarding collaborative advantage. Finally, the chapter reviews published research on partnership and collaboration in light of the theory outlined earlier in the chapter.

Chapter Four provides a description of the research strategy used for this study. In sequence, the chapter describes the ontological and epistemological position adopted for the study, the methodological implications that follow from this position, the nature of the case study approach and the specific methods used (interviews and documentary analysis). Throughout the chapter, there is a focus on the utility of the research strategy for answering the research questions and the implications of adopting this strategy. The chapter closes with a precise summary of the research protocol for the study.

Chapter Five begins the presentation of the empirical data collected as part of the study. In this chapter, data from interviewees from the New Opportunities Fund, the Department for Education and Skills and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport will provide a national perspective on the local context, partnerships and collaboration in the NOPES programme. Consideration of the aspirations of these stakeholders with regard to the role, membership and form of local partnerships in the NOPES programme will be followed by an examination of the mechanisms through which the New Opportunities Fund could govern the local development of

NOPES programme. The chapter concludes by using some of the theoretical concepts identified in Chapter Three to analyse the aspirations for local partnerships in, and governance of, the NOPES programme.

The following three chapters (Six, Seven and Eight) describe the findings from the three case study local authority areas included in the study. A common format is adopted for each of these chapters which comprise sections on NOPES partnerships, the wider collaborative context and the NOPES policy process and outputs. These sections are further subdivided by issues across the whole case study and at specific NOPES projects. To preserve a level of anonymity each of the local authority cases (and the individual NOPES projects) are assigned pseudonyms. The case of Northtown, a large metropolitan area in the north of England, is the focus of Chapter Six. The case of Midcity, a medium sized city in the East Midlands, is presented in Chapter Seven. Finally, Chapter Eight presents findings from Lonborough, an inner-London borough with significant areas of deprivation.

The final chapter (Nine) provides discussion of, and conclusions to, the empirical findings of the study. The chapter comprises four main sections. The first two sections are based upon the two research questions. These sections draw together the findings from the three case studies that comprise the study. The forms of partnership and collaboration connected to the NOPES programme in the three case study areas are examined in the first section. Following this, the effect of partnership and collaboration on the NOPES policy process and outputs is considered in the second section. Following these comparative sections, the third section of the chapter comprises a discussion of the implications of the study for wider understandings of partnership and collaboration. In doing so, issues that could be addressed by policy and practice in the future are also identified. Subsequently, the final section of the chapter examines the utility of the theoretical concepts that underpinned the study and identifies recommendations for future research in the fields that the study encompasses.

Chapter Two: The Government Policy Context

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to place the New Opportunities for PE and Sport (NOPES) programme, and this study's analysis of partnership and collaboration, in the context of central government policy. The first four sections of the chapter will trace the historical development of central government policy from the time of, what has become known as, the post-war social democratic consensus through to the Labour government led by Tony Blair. As the promotion of partnership and collaboration is commonly linked to changes in governmental structures (Skelcher, 2000), these early sections of the chapter will focus on particular policies that influenced, or were intended to influence, the role, scope and structure of the state at all levels in Britain. In doing so, specific consideration will be given to policies in education, community development and sport due to the close connection between these policy areas and the NOPES programme. Subsequently, the penultimate section of the chapter will more specifically focus on policies relating to the National Lottery and the NOPES programme. In doing so, links will be drawn between these policies and wider trends identified earlier in the chapter. Consideration will also be given to the prominence of partnership and collaboration in the distribution of Lottery funds generally and specifically in the NOPES programme. The chapter will conclude by examining the implications of the preceding sections for the study of local partnerships and collaboration in the context of the NOPES programme.

2.2 Social Democratic Consensus

In the period from 1945 to the early 1970s, there was broad agreement across politicians of all parties that the state had a key role in intervening to ensure fairness, to provide universal services and to combat poverty (Wilding, 1992). As such, this period is commonly referred to one of social democratic consensus. Although there may be some exaggeration of the

depth of this consensus (Houllihan & White, 2002), disagreements were mainly confined to the extent of redistribution that was required if the desired role for the state was to be fulfilled (Plant, 1985). With the consensus in place, state welfare spending and provision of services continued to increase throughout the period from 1945 until the early 1970s.

A key aspect of the increasing role of the state during the period of the social democratic consensus was the expansion of education provision which was viewed as contributing to social justice and creating equality of opportunity (Muschamp et al. 1999; Tomlinson, 2001). In fact, the Butler Education Act of 1944, which ensured secondary school education for all up to the age of 16, was the first piece of government legislation which was representative of wider policy themes during the consensus period. The expansion of education provision was accompanied by major structural change within the education system with a large increase in the number of, state provided, comprehensive schools (Chitty, 2004). This increase continued both during periods of Conservative and Labour government from 1954 until 1979 (Phillips, 2003).

The period of the social democratic consensus also saw the introduction of the first central government driven, community development programmes in the 1960s. Examples of such programmes were the Urban Programme (UP) and the Community Development Projects (CDP). These programmes both involved state intervention in order to address the multiple problems of deprivation and, as such, were representative of the prevalent ideology of the time (Edwards & Batley, 1978). This interventionist approach was reflected, to different extents, in the top-down approach of both the UP and CDPs. Although the programmes were delivered through local authorities, central government retained significant power through financial controls (Edwards & Batley, 1978). Similarly, at a local level, top-down planning was evident in both programmes. In particular, Foley & Martin (2000, p48) describe a ‘superficial’ commitment to community involvement in the UP. Although in practice the CDPs often included local participation in trying to develop the voluntary sector and promote self-help, at a more general level

they too were seen to represent a top-down policy of ‘social control’ (Loney, 1983; Mayo, 1982).

Prior to the emergence of the social democratic consensus the sport sector was characterised by voluntary- and amateur-based organisational structures (Coghlan, 1990). The start of government interest and involvement in sport, at all levels, is widely credited to have been marked by the report of the Wolfenden Committee in 1960 which prompted the establishment by the Wilson government of the Advisory Sports Council (Houlihan & White, 2002).
Although organisationally independent, the Advisory Sports Council was required by its Royal Charter to ‘take regard of government policy’. With sport now identified as being part of the welfare state and contributing to wider social policies, a major programme of building new sports facilities commenced (Coalter et al., 1986). As befitted the period, local authorities were given a key role in the expansion of facilities both as a provider of, and channel for, funding (Houlihan & White, 2002). Thus, both generally and in terms of particular programmes, sport was representative of the wider trend of expansion in the role and scope of the state that occurred during the period of the social democratic consensus.

2.3 Thatcher Government

It was during the early 1970s that economic problems first began to press on the expansion of the welfare state (Blackman, 1995). Increasingly the welfare state began to be seen, by politicians and academics alike, as part of the economic problem rather than the solution (Midwinter, 1994). The period from the early 1970s, and particularly from the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979, was one of great changes in the welfare state. Although, when considered as a whole, the ideology of Thatcherism may have lacked coherence and contained contradictory elements (Atkinson & Savage, 1994; Johnson, 1990), one of its key facets was a general antipathy to the state. Thus, successive Thatcher governments sought to limit the role of the state, promote approaches based on free market economics and support the

private sector and its practices (Atkinson & Savage, 1994). At a national level, policies such as privatisation transferred significant areas of state provision to the private sector. In other areas of public sector provision, quasi-markets were introduced, for example in the NHS, in order to achieve the efficiency that was perceived to exist in the private sector (Wilding, 1992, 1997). As a result of such policies, a greater array of agencies became involved in the implementation of public policy and a more fragmented state emerged (Holloway, 2000).

The process of fragmentation occurred at a local, as well as a national, level. Margaret Thatcher was particularly disparaging of local government (Wilding, 1997). As well as reducing the autonomy of local government by, for example, setting limits on spending, the Thatcher government also sought to reduce the role of local government. Thus, in certain policy areas, Compulsory Competitive Tendering ensured an increase in private sector involvement in the provision of services traditionally seen as the preserve of local government (Johnson, 1990). In terms of leisure management functions, Ravenscroft (1998) reports that Compulsory Competitive Tendering led to some local authorities ‘vigorously’ privatising services. Similarly the expansion in the number and role of quangos, such as Local Enterprise Councils and Training and Enterprise Councils, limited the role of local government.

In fact, it can be suggested that the instigation of an increasing number of quangos exemplified one of the tensions inherent in Thatcherite policies. Authors have suggested that part of the Thatcher government’s impetus for the introduction of quangos was a belief that they were more easily controlled by the centre than local government (Hirst, 2002). At the same time, there was also increasing central regulation of many policy areas, including those involving the newly privatised industries. Therefore, successive Thatcher governments oversaw and encouraged an increasing centralisation of power which existed alongside ideologically-driven policies aimed at reducing the role of the state.

The focus of the Thatcher governments' policies in particular policy areas relevant to this study reflected the wider trends identified above. Although the pace of educational reform was not dramatic during the first two terms of Thatcher's premiership, particular policies sought to introduce market forces into education as well as reduce state funding for education overall (Tomlinson, 2001). Subsequently, the Education Reform Act (ERA) of 1988 heralded significant structural changes to the education system in England and, as such, represented a radical departure from the approach to education that had existed during the period of the social democratic consensus (Penney & Evans, 1999; Chitty, 2004; Tomlinson, 2001). Amongst other things, the ERA continued the Thatcher government's policies of stripping powers from local authorities. Enhanced powers were instead given to schools' governing bodies although this was accompanied by increased central control particularly over school finances (Tomlinson, 2001). One of the powers given to schools was the choice to opt out of local authority control entirely by adopting Grant Maintained status. The advent of these new types of schools, as well as City Technology Colleges, began a process of diversification of secondary school provision which was continued by subsequent governments. A final notable aspect of the ERA was the expansion of market forces in education. The publishing of educational results, followed in 1992 by league tables, and the instigation of open enrolment at schools recast parents as 'consumers' in the education market place (Tomlinson, 2001).

As with education, the Thatcher government's approach to community development reflected a desire to reduce the role of the state and especially that of local government. The instigation in 1981 of Urban Development Corporations (UDCs) exemplified the Thatcher government's approach to community development and also represented the first introduction of private-sector led quangos (Wilks-Heeg, 1996). Furthermore, where in place, UDCs were not subject to local government planning regulations (Anderson, 1990). As such, community regeneration became entirely governed by market, rather than state, mechanisms (Edwards & Deakin, 1992).

In the main the Thatcher governments displayed little interest in sport and, in fact, demonstrated hostility towards it on occasion (Houlihan & White, 2002). Only when the Action Sport projects were initiated as a 'cheap, cost-effective and immediate response' to the urban riots of 1981 (Coalter et al., 1986, p64) did sport register as a concern of central government during the period of Margaret Thatcher's premiership. However, despite this lack of interest in sport, authors suggest that central government control of the Sports Council during the Thatcher premiership increased through political appointments to senior positions within the council (Coghlan, 1986; Henry, 2001). Although on the surface peculiar, the trends identified in sports policy were representative of the wider contradictory themes of the Thatcher government which sought to reduce the role of the state whilst concurrently increasing levels of central government control.

2.4 Major Government

The replacement of Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister by John Major in 1990 did not herald a distinctive change in policy or ideology. Major continued the trend of reducing expectations of state provision of welfare although he was not ideologically opposed to the state in the way that Thatcher was (Alcock, 1997). In general, Major was a more pragmatic leader than Thatcher (Kavanagh, 1994) and political pressures also contributed to the period of his government being identified as one of 'stagnation' (Alcock, 1997) or 'drifting' (Atkinson & Savage, 1994).

The transition from Thatcher to Major saw little major change in education policy (Chitty, 2004). Particular education policies continued the process, begun under Thatcher, of diversification and specialisation in the types of schools. More generally, there was further 'blurring of boundaries between the private and state sectors' in education throughout the period of the Major government (Chitty, 2004, p55).

There were, however, more significant changes enacted by the Major government in other policy areas. In community development policy, programmes such as City Challenge and Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) Challenge Fund incorporated a greater commitment to partnerships that included the public, private and voluntary sectors (Foley & Martin, 2000). The renewed role of local government in the delivery of such community development programmes also demonstrated Major's less ideological stance to the role of the state (Jones, 1996; Keyes, 1994). Nevertheless despite the 'localist' rhetoric in it's policies, central government retained a significant level of control over the delivery of programmes although through different mechanisms to those used previously (Hall & Nevin, 1999; Tiesdell & Alllmendinger, 2001). Representing a new form of market-based policy, the City Challenge and SRB Challenge Fund were among the first programmes to include a competitive bidding process (Foley & Martin, 2000). Central control came, therefore, through the setting of bid criteria and the establishment and monitoring of targets (Wilks-Heeg, 1996; Hall, 2000).

In sport, two developments during the period of the Major government marked the end of sport being a 'peripheral concern' to central government (Department of National Heritage, 1995, p21). The first of these was the instigation of the National Lottery in 1994 which, due to its importance to this study, will be considered in more depth in Section 2.6. The second key development was the publishing, in 1995, of the first definitive policy statement on sport for twenty years: *Sport: Raising the Game* (Department of National Heritage, 1995). In setting out a new direction for national sport policy, *Sport: Raising the Game* established school and elite sport as the two main and distinct priorities for central government. However, in common with trends identified in the Thatcher period, local government was increasingly marginalised in sports policy, rating barely a mention in *Sport: Raising the Game* which otherwise highlighted links with the voluntary and private sectors (Houlihan & White, 2002). Also in initiating the Sportsmatch programme and in emphasising the market value of sport to schools and

universities, *Sport: Raising the Game* continued the neo-liberal market-based policies of the Thatcher government.

Also of note during the period of the Major government was the formation of the Youth Sport Trust in 1994, an organisation which became an increasingly powerful influence on sports policy (Houlihan & White, 2002) and just one of an expanding number of policy actors in the 'house of sport' (Oakley & Green, 2001). Further policy actors were also created by the splitting of the Sports Council, in 1996, into separate English and UK bodies. The result of these changes, combined with the existing multiplicity of sports organisations, was that, by the end of the Major government, the sports infrastructure in the UK had become increasingly fragmented (Houlihan & White, 2002).

2.5 Blair Government

The election of the New Labour government under Tony Blair represented an end to 18 years of Conservative Party rule. What was less clear was the degree to which the policies of the Blair government represented a distinctive break with the policies of the governments that preceded it. In rhetorical terms, there was an attempt to portray the values of New Labour in terms of a Third Way that was distinct from the 'old' values of socialism previously promoted by the Labour party and the pure market capitalism favoured ideologically by Thatcherites. However, there has been considerable debate amongst academics as to whether the Blair government, and its early focus on the Third Way, elucidated a coherent and comprehensive set of values at all. For example, authors such as Smith (2003), Lister (2001) and Powell (2000) suggest that the Blair government was characterised by a lack of distinctive change from previous administrations.

With regard to the role and scope of the state, a key objective for the Blair government was to improve public services. Increased funding for public services was accompanied by a process of reform which was rhetorically

bracketed under the term ‘modernisation’ (Cabinet Office, 1999). However, ‘modernisation’, particularly as opposed to reform, was not particularly well defined by the Blair government (Perri 6 & Peck, 2003). In fact, while there were many different aspects to modernisation, the agenda lacked a coherent theme.

One strong element within the modernisation agenda was a desire to enable ‘joined-up government’ in order to address, so called, ‘wicked issues’ such as social exclusion through improved co-ordination and co-operation across traditionally divisive departmental silos in government. Part of the mechanism that the Blair government used to achieve ‘joined-up government’ was the creation of new bodies, for example the Social Exclusion Unit, whose functions overarched a number of central government departments. At a local level the introduction of a number of multi-agency initiatives targeting specific geographic areas, for example Education Action Zones, were also representative of the focus on ‘joined-up government’ (Perri 6 & Peck, 2003). However, Merchant (2003) suggests that the practicalities of local ‘joined-up government’ were complex despite its increased focus in central government policy. Furthermore, it is possible to argue that the introduction of a number of new initiatives and organisational structures merely continued the process of fragmentation that had occurred under previous Conservative governments.

Furthermore, the Blair government continued, and in some case expanded, the involvement of the private sector in the delivery of traditionally public services. Similar to the ‘joined–up’ terminology, much of this drive for private sector involvement was couched in the language of partnership. For example, the Modernising Government White Paper (Cabinet Office, 1999) positively enthused that the ‘distinctions between services delivered by the public and private sector are breaking down in many areas, opening the way to new ideas, partnerships and opportunities’.

Despite the stronger rhetoric towards partnership than in previous governments, there was continuity in the attempts by the Blair government

to enhance the level of central control over such structures. This feature is recognised by Coaffee (2005) who suggests that the Blair government's approaches to increased localism in policy were also accompanied by increasing central control and regulation. In part this central control was realised by the setting of centralised targets by the Blair government across all public services. Thus, while the desire for central control was similar to previous Conservative administrations, there was a continued shift towards alternative techniques enacted to do so.

2.5.1 Education Policy

In education policy, the advent of the Blair government saw little change in the trends of diversity and marketisation that had been initiated by the Thatcher and Major governments (Muschamp et al., 1999; Broadfoot, 2001; Phillips, 2003). Describing debate over diversity and uniformity of schools as 'outdated' (DfES, 2001, p6), the Blair government was unequivocal in its commitment to the diversification of types of schools. In fact, the government aimed to ensure that all schools achieved specialist status by 2008 (DfES, 2004). In addition to specialist schools, the New Labour government also pledged to continue the diversification of schools through the extension of city academies, of which 200 were planned by 2010, and by encouraging a variety of faith, business and community organisations to become involved in the running of schools.

Conservative market-based policies regarding the governance of the education system were also continued under the Blair government (Tomlinson, 2001; Muschamp et al., 1999). Although some Conservative market-based policies, such as the Assisted Places Scheme, were abandoned by the Blair government, fundamental market-based systems such as school league tables and open enrolment remained in place. In fact, the Blair government used market terminology in its policy documents by referring to parents as 'consumers' (DfES, 2002) and promoting what is often seen as the market-based language of 'choice'. These features were combined with increased inspection and target setting in the education

system, including the extension of Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills inspections to LEAs (Chitty, 2004).

However, despite the prominence of these continuities in education policy, different mechanisms of governance within the education system were also introduced by the Blair government. In policy and practice, the Blair government was more committed than those that preceded it to state intervention in order to improve standards in education (Power & Whitty, 1999). Frequently describing its policy as 'intervention in inverse proportion to success' (DfEE, 1997, p11-12; DfES, 2002, p41), the Blair government continually increased the measures available to it to address 'failing' schools and, even, LEAs. For example, the Schools Achieving Success White Paper (DfES, 2001) boasted of government interventions in 20 LEAs, some of which were forced to outsource specific functions to the private sector. As such, these new intervention powers were also one example of centralising education policies that further marginalised LEAs. The centralisation of school budgets initially proposed in the government's *Five Year Strategy for Children & Learners* (DfES, 2004) also reduced LEAs' role to becoming a conduit for central government funding. Moreover, policies giving more powers to schools, including freedom to manage their own land and employ staff, further eroded the role of LEAs (DfES, 2004). The Blair government thus sought to change the role of LEAs to one of 'enabling and empowering' (DfES, 2004, p5) and 'helping to deliver national initiatives' (DfES, 2002, p67) rather than one of local strategic decision making.

Besides the continuation of market-based policies and the increasing of central intervention in education, the Blair government also introduced and promoted the use of partnerships within the education system (Power & Whitty, 1999). In its *Five Year Strategy* (DfES, 2004), the government called for partnerships between voluntary, community and business sectors throughout the education system in order to 'join-up' the diverse types of educational provision (DfES, 2004). More generally, the influential *Every Child Matters* Green Paper (DfES, 2003) initiated substantial changes in the delivery of children's services and, in particular, attempted to 'join-up'

provision across existing department silos, including education (Williams, 2006). As such, *Every Child Matters* represented 'an organisational solution to existing problems of fragmentation and accountability in children's services' (Williams, 2006, p423).

Partnerships were also key to the Blair government's area-based education initiatives. Education Action Zones were one of the Blair government's first area-based initiatives to encourage partnerships between public, private and voluntary sectors in education. Education Action Zones were subsequently superseded by other programmes, such as Excellence in Cities, designed to improve education in disadvantaged areas (Gewirtz et al. 2005). There was, however, policy continuity in the promotion of partnership-based approaches in subsequent programmes. Furthermore, it is interesting to note Evans et al.'s (2005) observation that partnerships were most actively promoted in those education programmes specifically targeted at deprived areas.

Changes towards partnership-based approaches were, not only initiated across central and local levels of government, but also at individual schools. Policy documents such as the *Five Year Strategy* and *Every Child Matters* emphasised an extension of the role of schools to become the 'hubs' of their communities. This aspiration was subsequently branded under the programmatic title 'Extended Schools'. Schools were expected to become sites for a range of services within and beyond the school day for children, families and communities more generally (DfES, 2005). All secondary schools were encouraged to open beyond the school day from 8am to 6pm by offering additional activities, including sport and physical activity, for young people. Clusters of primary schools were expected to work together to deliver provision across their different sites. In keeping with the Blair government's general approach, this additional provision was to be delivered through partnerships with private- and voluntary-sector organisations rather than directly by schools or other public sector organisations (DfES, 2005).

2.5.2 Community Development Policy

With regard to community development, the Blair government also sought to utilise partnerships to overcome problems of fragmentation at a local level (SEU, 1998). In keeping with the modernisation theme of the Blair government, Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) were to be established in each local authority area to 'join up locally' the diverse array of national initiatives (SEU, 2001, p28). Continuing the movement back towards local authority power begun under John Major, local authorities had a significant role in LSPs especially in the initial stages when partners were brought together (NRU, 2002). However, policy documents also stressed the importance of the incorporating other actors from the public, voluntary, community and private sectors in the membership of LSPs (NRU, 2002).

As with other polices, the localist rhetoric regarding LSPs was balanced by their being subject to a large degree of central control. For one, the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit was charged with 'overseeing' the development of each LSPs' strategy (SEU, 2001, p55). Furthermore, the requirement for the instigation of LSPs in 88 deprived areas targeted for funding through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund increased central government control. Each of these LSPs were required to go through a process of central accreditation in order to gain Neighbourhood Renewal Funding. Although the funding was then unhypothecated, each local authority involved had to 'make a commitment to contribute to the delivery of national targets for deprived areas' (SEU, 2001, p49). Thus the processes of centralisation through targets and regulation recognised in the wider agenda of the Blair government can also be identified in the particular approach to community development.

2.5.3 Sport Policy

The priority given to sport by the Major government was continued and, it could be argued, enhanced by the subsequent Blair government. In each of the first two terms of office of the Blair government, policy documents on sport were published, firstly *A Sporting Future for All* in 2000 followed by *Game Plan* in 2002. Although there are some similarities between the policies adopted by the Blair and Major governments, increasingly differences became evident, particularly with regard to the purpose of investment and the role of the state in sport in this country.

However, in terms of the aspects of sport upon which government focused, little changed upon the advent of the Blair government. Of the two policy documents *Game Plan* most explicitly described a similar 'twin track' approach of separately focusing on both participation and elite sport. Although the focus on participation in itself was somewhat broader than the focus on school sport under John Major, the emphasis on young people and schools was still apparent. For example, there was continuity in the policy objective first stated in *A Sporting Future for All* of providing 2 hours of PE and school sport per week for all pupils. The salience of school sport as an issue for government was also highlighted by the significant levels of government-directed investment in the national PE, School Sport and Club Links strategy, which included the School Sport Partnership and Specialist Sports Colleges programmes, as well as the NOPES programme itself (Green, 2006).

Despite these continuities, changes under the Blair government required sport to contribute to cross-cutting agendas that covered a number of functions of government. For example, the Policy Action Team 10 report, published early in the life of the Blair government, highlighted the contribution that sport and the arts could make to social inclusion. (Social Exclusion Unit, 1999; Ravenscroft, 2005). Similarly, the investment in school sport was also premised on the contribution it could make to educational aims such as whole school improvement and individual behaviour and

attendance (Houlihan & Green, 2006). Other government polices and programmes have extended the social policy role of sport into areas such as health, crime (in particular through the Positive Futures programme) and neighbourhood renewal (see NRU, 2004). As a result of this desire for sport to contribute to cross-cutting agendas, sport was also subject to the Blair government's wider modernisation agenda and commitment to 'joined-up' government. At national level, cross-departmental sport groups were instigated within central government and, at a local level, funding was to be used to 'drive modernisation and wider partnership working with the voluntary and private sectors' (DCMS / Strategy Unit, 2002, p180).

As in other policy areas, the promotion of partnership and 'joined-up government' were accompanied by increasing central government intervention and control over sport policy. Although *Game Plan* (DCMS / Strategy Unit, 2002, p43) explicitly stated a neo-liberal, market-based approach to state intervention in sport which was 'justified when it corrects "inefficiencies" in provision by the private or voluntary sectors', the remainder of the document envisaged a stronger steering role for central government than previously existed. For example, *Game Plan* heralded that a slimmed down Sport England's 'key function should be to distribute funds strategically, in line with government's top level priorities' (DCMS / Strategy Unit, 2002). Besides the use of funding as a lever to increase centralised control, other elements of the government's modernisation agenda were apparent in its sport policies. The setting of targets, with funding linked to their achievement, was first mentioned in *A Sporting Future for All.* Similarly, the government designated a regulatory role for Sport England as the 'watchdog for public funds' (DCMS, 2000, p20). As a result of these changes, Green (2006, p228) suggests that the 'government is now "shaping" sport policy development with a far greater hand than ever before'.

2.6 The National Lottery and the New Opportunities for PE and Sport Programme

2.6.1 National Lottery Policy

The National Lottery was introduced in 1993 through the National Lottery etc. [sic] Bill with the first draw being held in November 1994. Of the money spent on ticket sales, approximately 28% was to go to five ‘good causes’ of which sport was one. Despite the emphasis that Lottery grants would be ‘additional’ to core government spending (Moore, 1997), it has been suggested that the advent of the National Lottery represented a further ‘rolling-back’ of the state’s responsibilities (Henry, 2001). This link with wider policy trends was replicated in the use of quangos, including the English Sports Council, to distribute Lottery funds and the selection of a private sector company to operate the Lottery itself.

Furthermore, the centralising trend of the successive governments since the social democratic consensus was replicated in early National Lottery policy. Despite the independent nature of distributing bodies, central government retained significant control over the allocation of Lottery money through its ability to issue policy directions to distributing bodies. This capability of central control, in turn, supported the increasing power of central government over sport policy at the expense of the Sports Council (Houlihan & White, 2002; Oakley & Green, 2001). Alternatively, for the potential recipients of Lottery funding, the initial policy directions that specified a requirement for partnership funding strengthened those, mainly more affluent, organisations that had access to such funding (Evans, 1995). Furthermore, initial restrictions on Lottery funding inhibited strategic planning at all levels, especially within local authorities where an ad-hoc approach to applying for funding had to be adopted (Houlihan & White, 2002; White, 1999).

Upon taking office, the Blair government sought to address a number of the problems that had been identified in the Lottery in the period up until 1997.

Within three months of taking office the Blair government had already published a White Paper, entitled *The People's Lottery*, which proposed a number of changes to the National Lottery. Within a year it was followed by a National Lottery Bill which enacted the majority of changes suggested in the White Paper. The overall purpose of the changes was to ensure that 'the Lottery can work better – for everyone who plays it and everyone who benefits from the good causes it supports' (DCMS, 1997, p1).

One of the changes to the Lottery was that, rather than purely responding to the demand expressed through received applications, distributing bodies were required to submit, to the government, strategic plans for the distribution of funds. In many ways the language used by the government in describing these strategic plans reflected wider themes running throughout the Blair government. Funds were now to be distributed 'according to a clear strategy taking into account need and priorities for health, education and the environment' (DCMS, 1997, p18). As a distributing body, therefore, Sport England was now encouraged to use sport as a tool to support wider, cross-cutting governmental priorities. Similarly, it was hoped that 'Lottery funding is seen as part of regional and local strategies to bring about economic, cultural and social regeneration' (DCMS, 1997). This quote emphasises not only central government priorities but also exemplifies the expectation that local agencies address these same priorities.

As part of these wider changes to the Lottery, the incoming Labour government created the New Opportunities Fund (NOF), a new Lottery distributor to fund health, education and environmental projects. Initially NOF was allocated £1 billion in funding for the period until 2001. Subsequently 13⅓% of all Lottery funding was allocated to NOF, this percentage increasing to 33⅓% after the Millennium Commission ceased awarding grants[1]. With NOF becoming the largest distributor of Lottery

[1] In 2003, the government announced plans to merge the New Opportunities Fund with the Communities Fund (formerly the National Lottery Charities Board) to create the Big Lottery Fund which was to become responsible for 50% of all Lottery money committed to good causes. To prevent confusion both the New Opportunities Fund and the Big Lottery Fund will be referred to as 'the Fund' in subsequent chapters.

funds, central government ensured that it had greater control of the allocation of funding by this distribution body. Government policy directions for NOF were used in a more specific way, giving precise instructions on the programmes to which NOF would direct its monies. In increasing its control over NOF, the government was criticised in Parliament for compromising the 'arms length principle to Lottery funding' and moving 'the good cause much closer to the sphere of their [government] responsibilities' (Seeley, 1998, p73). Similarly Houlihan & White (2002, p98) recognise that, together with the changes made to other distributors, the priorities for NOF began to make 'the National Lottery a more effective tool for achieving the policy objectives of the Labour government' (Houlihan & White, 2002, p98).

Partnerships were also a key element of the Blair government's National Lottery policy. *The People's Lottery* stated that 'partnership with local authorities, voluntary organisations and business will continue to play an important part in the Lottery' (DCMS, 1997, p18). While the requirement for partnership funding had been reduced since the start of the Lottery, the government remained keen that the Lottery should continue to promote partnership working, especially at a local level. In line with this focus, partnership working was a strong focus for NOF with the organisation's mission and values statement asserting

> *We value and support effective partnership working. We aim to support and work with partnerships where they exist and facilitate information sharing and best practice to enable new partnerships to form.*
>
> (NOF, 2001, p24)

Therefore, not only was NOF to deliver funding through partnerships but also, as a Lottery distributor, to encourage the development of partnerships. This appears to be more explicitly proactive than Lottery distributors had previously been in terms of specifying how organisations receiving funding were to operate.

Finally, the response of local authorities to the focus of Lottery and NOF policy on partnership is of interest. In responding to the White Paper local authorities were reported to have expressed:

> *a preference for collaboration [which] was tempered by the caution, among a reasonably sized minority, that setting up another series of collaborative networks and partnerships could be counterproductive; for some, it seemed more useful to just develop further those partnerships and networks already in place designed to work for competitive bidding systems*
>
> (White, 1999, p87)

As identified in a report by the Audit Commission (1998), the local authority response emphasised the resource implications in setting up and operating partnerships, a facet that received little comment in official government documents.

2.6.2 The New Opportunities for PE and Sport programme

In April 2001, the government issued its third set of policy directions to NOF, specifying a number of new programmes to be funded. One of these programmes was the New Opportunities for PE and Sport (NOPES) programme. In the policy directions the government required NOF to:

> *commit funds to projects designed to bring about a step-change in the provision of sporting facilities for young people and the community generally by:*
>
> *i. refurbishing existing, and building new, indoor and outdoor sports facilities for school and community use*
>
> *ii. providing initial revenue funding to support the development and promotion of these sporting facilities for community use*
>
> *iii. building and refurbishing outdoor adventure facilities, where this would benefit young people who do not currently have ready access to these facilities.*

In total, the government specified that £750.75million should be committed to the NOPES programme, £581.25million of which was to be spent in England. Other than a number of explanatory notes, there was no more guidance formally given to NOF on the NOPES programme.

In partnership with other members of the national School Sport Alliance, namely the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Youth Sport Trust, NOF developed six key outcomes for the NOPES programme as follows:

1. *Improved physical education and sport in schools*
2. *Higher standards across the whole school through PE, sport and other forms of physical activity*
3. *Better opportunities to increase the levels of physical activity among the school age population and, more generally, local communities*
4. *Improved collaboration, co-operation and partnership between schools and between schools and their communities*
5. *Promotion of social inclusion through access to and use of sports and outdoor adventure facilities by all groups in society*
6. *Innovation and best practice in the design and management of facilities.*

These outcomes and information from other official NOPES documentation demonstrated the close alignment of the programme with wider policies of the Blair government. In terms of the 'twin track' approach to sports policy, the outcomes and policy directions for NOPES reflected the focus on youth and school sport element. Moreover, NOF's guidance notes for the programme stated that the NOPES programme should 'integrate and support local strategies to improve PE and school sport' (NOF, 2001, p2). NOPES Outcomes Two and Five also reflected the Blair government's emphasis on sport contributing to wider, cross-cutting agendas, namely higher educational standards and social inclusion. In addition, the aspiration encompassed in Outcomes 3 and 4, that schools would work in partnership

with a variety of different agencies to provide opportunities for the wider community was representative of wider government policy which, as previously stated, was subsequently more fully elucidated under the programmatic term Extended Schools (DfES, 2005).

Partnerships were also a key facet of the NOPES programme in the distribution of funds and the management of the programme at local authority level. Unlike a number of other Lottery funded programmes, NOPES was based upon a system whereby every local education authority (LEA) in England was allocated a particular amount of funding for projects in their area. However, in the design of the programme, NOPES was not seen as purely an LEA programme. Thus, in keeping with the Fund's own ethos and wider government policy, LEAs were required to develop partnerships with a variety of organisations to 'identify priorities for funding' and subsequently lead a process of application to NOF in order to release this funding (NOF, 2001, p3). As the precise expectations of the Fund and other central government stakeholders as to the form and role of these partnerships will be covered more fully in Chapter Five, it is sufficient at point to emphasise the centrality of these partnerships to the delivery of the NOPES programme within each LEA area.

2.7 Conclusions

Throughout this chapter, both the early sections on government policies and the preceding section on the National Lottery, a number of recurring themes can be identified. In line with the focus of the chapter, as stated in the introduction, the scope and role of the state at all levels is one such theme. Associated with this focus, governmental approaches to involvement of private and voluntary sectors as well as the types of relationships between agencies from all three sectors has also been a recurring theme of the chapter. A third theme has been the level of control that central government has exerted over other agencies and the methods used to do so. The purpose of this concluding section is to provide a synthesis of these themes and to consider their implications for this study.

Since the expansion of the role of government during the period of the social democratic consensus, there has been a transformation in the role, scope and structure of the state. Particularly during the period of Conservative government from 1979 to 1992, successive governments attempted to reduce or limit the role of the state. This transformation has involved a general transference of government responsibilities to other agencies in the private and voluntary sectors as well as to a variety of quangos. The National Lottery itself, as well as the organisations designated as distribution bodies, can also be identified as symbolising this trend. Furthermore, the general policy trends regarding the state can be identified in each of the education, community development and sport policy areas in which there has been an increase in the number and type of policy actors involved in the development and implementation of policy. Dependent on the context and particular source, this has been referred to as both fragmentation and diversification. As a result, a key issue for this study is the whether an integrated approach to PE, school and community sport policy can be developed, in general and for the NOPES programme, in a fragmented local context.

Associated with the process of reducing the role and scope of the state, there was a general lessening of the power of local authorities since the end of the social democratic consensus. However, during the period of the Blair government, the role of local government was one issue where there was divergence between the three policy areas considered. In community development and sport, the Blair government gave local authorities a key role, particularly in the co-ordination of policy at a local level. Conversely, in education LEAs were subject to a further erosion of power becoming organisations more concerned with enabling than delivery. These trends in the role of local government are particularly pertinent to the programme at the centre of this study, the NOPES programme. With local authorities assigned a key role in the NOPES programme, an important issue to be considered within this study is, therefore, the extent to which local authorities have the capacity and capability to fulfil this required role.

Resulting from the diversification and fragmentation of policy actors at all levels, policies and programmes that have involved and required partnerships between a variety of organisations have proliferated, firstly under the Major government and to a greater degree during the period of the Blair government. Again, this trend can be identified at all levels and across the different policy areas considered in this chapter. Given this wider focus, the prominence given to partnership and collaboration by NOF, both generally and specifically in the NOPES programme, is unsurprising. These policy trends highlight the relevance of the focus of this study on partnership and collaboration within the NOPES programme. In addition, the national focus on partnership working and collaboration emphasises the importance of examining the extent to which such practices have become ingrained at a local level and the resultant consequences for policy development and implementation.

A final theme running through the chapter has been the degree and mechanisms of central government control in a changing governmental context. Throughout the time period considered and in each of the three policy areas there was a creeping centralisation of power. However, the methods used by central government to exert power changed over the time period studied. Centralised funding was increasingly linked to central government objectives. While targets, centralised performance indicators and increasing regulation were evident in education from the Thatcher period, their implementation in the fields of sport and community development increased significantly under the Blair government. Furthermore, the extension of a ‘bidding culture’ for centralised funds in various policy areas also increased the power of central government. Although the governance of the NOPES programme will be covered in more detail in Chapter Five, it could be suggested that the inclusion of application mechanisms and the designation of outcomes for the NOPES programme epitomises these wider trends. Therefore, the influence of these centralised mechanisms on local agencies and policies is another key issue for this study. The theme of centralisation also reiterates the strong link, identified

throughout these conclusions, between the NOPES programme and wider policy trends. These similarities demonstrate the overall value of this study with its focus on partnership and collaboration in the NOPES programme.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Review

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a basis for the description and analysis of partnership and collaboration that is the focus of the study. The chapter is divided into four main sections. The first section of the chapter considers a range of descriptive and analytic concepts that can generally be applied to policy making and decisions in a programme such as NOPES. In addition, these concepts have applicability at both the national and local levels encompassed by this study. The specific concepts that will be covered in this first section are theories of power, modes of governance and co-ordination, 'new' governance and governmentality. Subsequently, the second section of the chapter examines concepts that are directly relevant to the analysis of particular partnership and collaborative arrangements. Sub-sections will examine the concept of policy networks, regime theory and collaborative capacity and advantage in turn. The final major section of the chapter reviews recent studies of partnership and collaboration and, in doing so, draws upon themes and concepts identified in previous sections.

3.2 Descriptive and Analytic Concepts

3.2.1 Power

Debates on power are characterised by the lack of consensus amongst the variety of contributing authors (Goverde et al., 2000). A number of contentious issues are definitional. Scott (2001, p1) defines power, in broad terms, as the 'production of causal effects'. More specific definitions examine features such as whether the exercise of power is intentional or otherwise and whether power is associated with its exercise or merely the capacity for action. Rather than fully investigating these definitional issues (for a fuller treatment, see Lukes, 1986), this section will mainly review different understandings of the nature of power and its application. In

adopting this focus, a distinction will be made between two schools of literature on power. Firstly, the more commonly articulated, directive notion of ‘power over’ will be considered. This will be followed by an examination of the alternative focus of authors such as Hannah Arendt and Talcott Parsons who concentrate on ‘power to’ and associated capacity and relational issues.

As the term indicates, literature on ‘power over’ assumes both an agent who holds power and, what Scott (2001) terms, a ‘subaltern’ who is affected in some way by this power. In this conception, power is a zero-sum game in that there is a limited amount of power which is variably distributed between different agents (Goehler, 2000). Agents use their power in order to realise their interests whilst ‘subalterns’ may use what power they have to resist this exercise of power, either overtly or covertly (Scott, 2001). Thus, Lukes (2005) states that the study of power is concerned with the achievement, or otherwise, of particular outcomes. Within the ‘power over’ literature, conceptualisations of the mechanisms of power, and their study, have continued to develop to the point where Lukes (1974) identifies three separate faces or dimensions of power, each of which is accompanied by different ontological and epistemological assumptions. The following paragraphs will consider each of these three dimensions in turn.

The first dimension of power is commonly associated with Dahl and thus has often been labelled pluralist. Lukes (2005), however, asserts that elitist conclusions can be drawn from first dimension analyses of power. The first dimension of power is underpinned by positivist assumptions regarding the actions of agents and the nature of power. Dahl was interested in the visible exercise of power in particular decision making processes (Goverde et al., 2000). Actors are assumed to have overt preferences or interests which are acted upon rationally in conflicts in political arenas (Lukes, 2005). Thus Lukes (2005, p5) states that, for Dahl and others ‘power [is] intentional and active: indeed it was ‘measured’ by studying its exercise’. To paraphrase, the power of actors could be studied by examining the extent to which they were able to realise their stated interests.

The principal contributors to the development of the second dimension of power, Bachrach & Baratz (1962, 1963, 1970), identify the first dimension as being limited by its concentration on overt decision making (Goverde et al., 2000). The second dimension of power therefore concerns systematic biases that influence the selection of issues to be considered (Parsons, 1995). The exercise of power is not visible, as in the first dimension, but rather hidden in 'non-decisions' that limit overt decision making to issues that are not threatening to the interests of powerful actors (Scott, 2001; Lukes, 2005). The processes through which powerful agents control the agenda in this way include influencing the values of others, political processes and rituals (Lukes, 2005). Moving towards Lukes' (1974) third dimension of power, Parsons (1995) cites Crenson (1971) as suggesting that the second dimension of power also operates at an 'ideological level' in terms of how particular problems are articulated and understood.

Haugaard (2000) considers that Lukes' (1974) analysis of his third dimension of power heralded a turning point from positivistic truth claims to a more nuanced study of the construction of meaning and knowledge. Lukes (1974) was interested in what he identified as the willing compliance of actors to the domination of others. Fundamental to understanding these phenomena is the idea of false consciousness[2] (Goverde et al., 2000). This form of power influences agents to believe that their 'interest lies in doing something that is, in fact, harmful to them or contrary to their deeper interests' (Scott, 2001, p8). Thus, the exercise of power is 'influencing, shaping and determining' the articulated wants of subjects who are unaware of their 'real' interests (Lukes, 1974, p23). The links between this form of power and the theorisations of others, such as Foucault, will be considered in the conclusions to this section.

Compared to the conceptualisations of power considered thus far, the contributions of authors such as Hannah Arendt (1970) and Talcott Parsons

[2] It should be noted that the idea of false consciousness is also present in Marxist literature.

(1963) represent an entirely different perspective. Haugaard (2000, p38) draws the distinction between Arendt's conception of power and that of Lukes and others: 'power should not be considered purely conflictually but, rather, as a capacity for action which individuals gain by membership of a social system'. Similarly, Parsons viewed power as a being associated with collective action rather than the subjugation of one actor by another (Goehler, 2000). Another difference is that 'power to' is identified as potentially a positive-sum game compared to the zero-sum game involved in 'power over' (Scott, 2001). Goehler (2000), in his similar conceptualisation of 'intransitive power', goes further suggesting that this type of power is self-reinforcing in that the more power is exercised the greater the impetus for more intensive common action which in turn enhances levels of power.

In conceptualising 'power to', authors also describe the relationships between agencies involved in collective action. For Parsons, power is based upon the levels of trust between agencies and the values that these agencies share. In Arendt's more particular conceptualisation, communication between agents creates the capability for co-ordination and collaborative action (Scott, 2001). Arendt's focus on communication highlights a difference with Parsons, in that she suggests that power thus constituted is an end in itself, whereas for Parsons, power necessarily involves the production of outcomes (Habermas, 1986). A further point that requires clarification is that the focus on communal action does not preclude hierarchical relationships between actors, with Parsons suggesting that leadership could be legitimised in order to achieve common purposes (Scott, 2001).

The concept of 'power to' has been criticised by a number of authors for being overly normative (e.g. Habermas, 1986; Goehler, 2000). Lukes (2005) also suggests that the form of power suggested by Arendt and Parsons could be encompassed within the three dimensions that form the basis for his theorisation of power. Goehler (2000) makes a more subtle point suggesting that while intransitive power, as he terms it, allows increased

capacity for action, it reduces options for individual exercise of power over other agencies (transitive power as he terms it).

To conclude this discussion of power, it is worth considering the position of Foucault (1978) who, some authors suggest, may offer a way in which the two schools of thought on power may be brought together. In theorising the 'cultural formation' of agents (Scott, 2001) in a way that allows 'social production' (Goehler, 2000), Foucault integrates elements of both 'power over' and 'power to'. While recognising these two elements, Lukes (2005) criticises Foucault for offering only a normative, ideal-type concept of power that also, in its broad scope, does not allow individual agents the freedom that is inherent in Lukes' own work. Although it is not the place of this study to examine the relevant merits of these authors, further examination of the neo-Foucaultian concept of governmentality will be offered in the subsequent Section 3.2.4.

3.2.2 Modes of Co-ordination and Governance

Literature on modes of co-ordination or governance is located with different fields of study, most notably political studies and organisational sociology. The different origins of the literature account for the use of the alternative terms: modes of co-ordination or modes of governance. In general, the term co-ordination is mainly used in the organisational literature in studies of relationships between individuals, agencies and organisations. The term governance is more commonly used in the political studies literature where it is understood in relation to the operation of government and the state. Throughout this section, the term will be used according to that used in the source text and the precise phenomenon being considered.

Despite coming from different fields of study, authors commonly identify and describe three main, alternative modes of co-ordination and governance: hierarchies, markets and networks. Variations on this categorisation have been suggested; for example Dahl & Lindblom (1953 cited in Kickert & Koppenjam, 1997) identified polyarchy and negotiation as alternative modes

instead of networks, Considine & Lewis (1999) distinguish between corporate and procedural hierarchies and Pierre & Peters (2000) add community governance to the three commonly accepted modes of governance. Furthermore, Frances et al. (1991) comment that there are no widely accepted, clear definitions of what constitutes markets, hierarchies and networks and how they work. However, the widespread adoption of the hierarchy / market / network categorisation makes it a suitable point of reference for the following overview of different modes of co-ordination. Although it relates to modes of economic co-ordination between non-state organisations, Powell's (1991) commonly reproduced table (Table 1 overleaf) provides a useful summary of the different characteristics of hierarchies, markets and networks.

As an example of the heterogeneity of each of the three modes of governance, Pierre and Peters (2000) identify that the term hierarchy could be used in a number of different ways to refer to the relationship between state and society, the way in which the state is internally organised or the way in which the state operates. Similarly, in organisational sociology, hierarchical modes of co-ordination can apply both within individual organisations and between different organisations. Within government and other organisations, hierarchies are associated with departmental silos, each with clearly demarcated areas of expertise, roles and responsibilities (Powell, 1991).

In general, hierarchies are associated with top-down systematic planning and implementation of policies (Entwhistle et al., 2007). Internally, co-ordination is achieved through the bureaucratic imposition of rules, regularised administrative procedures and formal decision making structures that are adhered to by individuals within the organisation (Frances et al., 1991, Powell, 1991). Externally, governments may rely on lawmaking and other forms of regulation in order to hierarchically enact policy (Pierre and Peters, 2000). Within hierarchies, the clear lines of authority provide accountability for decisions, however as a result there is an associated lack

of flexibility and innovation (Lowndes & Skelcher, 1998; Frances et al. 1991).

Table 1: Comparison of modes of co-ordination

Key Features	Different Modes		
	Hierarchy	**Market**	**Network**
Normative basis	Employment relationship	Contract – property rights	Complementary strengths
Means of communication	Routines	Prices	Relational
Methods of conflict resolution	Administrative fiat – supervision	Haggling – resorts to courts for enforcement	Norm of reciprocity – reputational concerns
Degree of flexibility	Low	High	Medium
Amount of commitment between the parties	Medium to high	Low	Medium to high
Tone or climate	Formal, bureaucratic	Precision and / or suspicion	Open-ended, mutual benefits
Actor preferences or choices	Dependent	Independent	Interdependent

Source: Adapted from Powell (1991, p269)

Rather than the visible management within hierarchies, markets provide an 'invisible hand' in order to co-ordinate relationships (Ranade & Hudson, 2003, p35). In markets, price mechanisms and contracts govern the exchange of clearly specified resources between agencies (Lowndes & Skelcher, 1998). These agencies are viewed as independent of each other and acting in their own self-interest (Frances et al, 1991). As a result, market relationships are characterised by having a high degree of flexibility, encompassing little trust and often being short-term arrangements (Powell, 1991). Positive accounts of market co-ordination point to the freedom of

choice afforded to individual agencies and their efficiency in the production and allocation of goods and services (Entwhistle et al., 2007).

Authors are in general agreement on the common features of networks when compared to hierarchies and markets as an alternative mode of co-ordination. Members of networks are viewed as interdependent and relatively equal (Marcassen & Torfing, 2003; Frances et al., 1991). Relationships between these network members are informal and based on trust, reciprocity and negotiation (Van Kersbergen & Van Waarden, 2004; Lowndes & Skelcher, 1998). These features contribute to relationships in networks being relatively long-term, autonomous and self-regulating (Ranade & Hudson, 2003; Lowndes & Skelcher, 1998). Alternatively, Powell (1991) suggests these characteristics of networks contribute to making them inflexible and unaccountable.

As with markets, members' resources are identified as a key feature of networks. However, the conception and utilisation of resources within networks differs from that within markets. In the first case, resources within networks include those that are not easily measured (and thus may not have a price in markets) such as knowledge (Powell, 1991). Rather than trade resources, authors point to a pooling of resources in networks in order to achieve common aims (Marcassen & Torfing, 2003; Borzel, 1998). This feature, in itself, is based on the assumption that members of networks have complementary interests that they cannot achieve working individually (Powell, 1991).

The commonality between authors' characterisations of networks, as described, conceals underlying complexities. These complexities lie in the public policy literature where *policy* networks are a widely considered and utilised concept. Borzel (1998) and Marsh (1998a) identify two separate, yet interconnected, schools of policy network literature. The first, mainly European, school of literature considers policy networks in much the same way as in this chapter to date: namely as a mode of governance. However, within this school, both Damgaard (2006) and Kickert & Koppenjam (1997)

question whether all networks necessarily have the capacity to govern. Kickert & Koppenjam (1997) suggest that networks need to be 'activated' in order to have an influence on policy. Similarly, Damgaard (2006, p673) suggests that 'local network governing is an issue considerably more complex than "merely" mandating the creation of local policy networks'. Alternatively, the second body of policy network literature, mainly originating from the UK, examines policy networks as an organisational form and a forum for mediating between the interests of different state and non-state actors. At this point, it is sufficient to highlight the distinction between these two bodies of policy network literature. A fuller consideration of the literature on policy networks as an organisational form will be presented in Section 3.3.1.

The literature on policy networks as a form of governance also highlights other issues concerning their theoretical, empirical and historical relationship with hierarchies and markets. The nature of such relationships are contested by a number of authors. Damgaard (2006, p674), for example, suggests that policy networks share positive characteristics of both hierarchies and markets:

> *networks appear to have the ability to combine the individual autonomy of markets with the properties of hierarchies, that is, to consciously pursue goals and act according to anticipated effects.*

While agreeing that networks could be linked with hierarchies and markets, Frances et al. (1991) also put forward the idea that the concept of networks might be sufficiently flexible to encompass the other two forms of co-ordination. Conversely, Kickert & Koppenjam (1997) identify networks as subject to hierarchical control from governments. Finally, Entwhistle et al. (2007, p66) offer an alternative perspective suggesting that empirically 'no one form of co-ordination can act in reality in isolation of others'.

The co-existence of networks alongside hierarchies and markets is supported by Ranade & Hudson (2003). In asserting this point, Ranade &

Hudson (2003) also suggest that the literature that provides a chronological account of transformations from hierarchical, through market to network modes of governance represents an overly simplistic explanation. However, such chronological accounts are commonplace, particularly in the literature that identifies policy networks as a *new* mode of governance (see, for example, Marin & Mayntz, 1991). The idea that new forms of governance have emerged relatively recently is one that will be considered further in the following section.

3.2.3 Governance

Literature on new forms of governance represents merely one perspective within a wider field of study. As in the last subsection, governance in the broadest (and simplest) sense has been described as 'ways of governing, whether of organisations, social systems or the state itself' (Newman, 2001, p4). Thus, it can be seen how governance in this sense could apply equally to hierarchies, markets and networks. Typical of the diversity of definitions of governance, Rhodes (2000b) identified seven different perspectives[3] from which it can and has been studied. These seven perspectives are 'governance as': corporate governance, the new public management, 'good governance', international interdependence, a socio-cybernetic system, new political economy and networks. There is overlap between some of these perspectives and a number of them have direct relevance to this study. As an aside, for example, the normative concept of 'good governance' provides interesting insights regarding stakeholder involvement, transparency, equality, ethics, accountability and sustainability (Bovaird and Loffler, 2003a).

It is the literature that provides a descriptive analysis of new forms of governance that is the focus of this section. In this context, Stoker (2000, p3) develops Newman's definition of governance towards a 'concern with

[3] Rhodes calls these seven perspectives 'definitions'. However, perspectives may be a more apt term since his articulation of these seven definitions describes broad areas of study rather than providing a tight, distinct classification.

governing … in the realm of public affairs in conditions where it is not possible to rest on recourse to the authority of the state'. This definition is similar to what Newman (2001) refers to as the 'shorthand' use of the term governance. Regarding this common 'shorthand', Pierre & Stoker (2000, p32) believe there is 'agreement that "governance" refers to the development of governing styles in which boundaries between and within public and private sectors have become blurred'. Such a definition, and the change implicit within it, is indicative of the literature that shall be considered in this section.

The theorisation and study of the concept of governance has been subject to recent and rapid development. This development has been such that governance has become the 'defining narrative of British government at the start of the new century' (Rhodes, 2000a, p6). The narrative to which Rhodes refers has taken place at the level of both national and local government. In particular, the ESRC Local Governance programme has been instrumental in advancing the development of governance as a concept that can be applied at a local level. Given the focus of this study, governance will be considered in general whilst also highlighting aspects of theory that apply particularly at the local level. In structuring the remainder of this section, a brief description of the factors that authors identify as having lead to changes in governing styles will be followed by a more in depth examination of the characteristics of the new forms of governance that have emerged.

Authors' descriptions of factors underpinning the development of new forms of governance fall into two categories: those that exist at a level beyond the British state but impact upon it, such as globalisation, and those that are particular to the British state and often are related to policies of British governments. However, it is disingenuous to emphasise a strict categorisation of factors as these two levels of analysis are often linked. What follows should be considered a summary of factors underpinning the shift to new governing arrangements in what is a complex and still-evolving context.

One of the most common, though often under explained, factors cited by authors as underpinning the change to governance is globalisation. Globalisation has seen a shift in power from the nation state to international markets, global companies and supra-national structures such as the World Bank and European Union (Newman, 2001). The reduction of state power over international capital has been viewed as contributing to fiscal crises in a variety of countries, including the United Kingdom, in the 1980s (Pierre, 2000; Bovaird & Loffler, 2003b). These crises contributed to and combined with the growing ideological climate which asserted that direct state intervention was failing in a number of policy areas. As described in Chapter Two, the adoption of this ideology by the Thatcher government in the 1980s introduced policies that redefined the role of the state in the United Kingdom. In this chronological account, the Thatcher administration attempted to shift power from state hierarchies to market mechanisms (Newman, 2001). Another relevant feature of government policy identified in Chapter Two was the wider process of fragmentation of service delivery and the reduction in the power of local authorities. Stoker (2000, p2) suggests that the result of these policies was that 'core actors associated with each policy issue are spread not only among a wide variety of institutions but also across public, private and voluntary sectors'.

Following from the major changes in local government overseen by successive Conservative governments, there was some attempt by the Labour administration led by Tony Blair to redefine the role of local government. The Blair government broadly accepted the reduction in local government's role in service delivery and sought to replace it by a new role 'to lead a process of social, economic and political development' in their respective localities (Miller, Dickson & Stoker, 2000, p27). Such a new role fits with the idea, consistent with the modernisation agenda of the Blair government, that market modes of co-ordination failed to deliver the desired outcomes in some policy areas, especially those with 'wicked issues' such as crime and social inclusion.

In fact, the development of a new role for local authorities is similar to Sullivan & Skelcher's (2002) more general analysis of the changes in the role and scope of the state that were considered in Chapter Two. While many authors suggest that the government's role has been diminished in a 'hollowed out' state, Sullivan & Skelcher (2002) instead view 'hollowing out' as a process that has led towards a new role of government within what they refer to as the 'congested state'. As suggested towards the end of the previous subsection, authors such as Skelcher (2000, p12) and Newman (2001) identify 'plural modes of governance' including hierarchies, markets and networks within this congested state. Thus, the literature on modes of co-ordination and governance may not be as simple as pointing to a shift towards governance through networks, as suggested by Rhodes (1999). However, there is little dispute amongst authors that as a result of the processes and changes described, new governing arrangements exist both at a local level and within particular policy sectors[4]. It is, therefore, important to identify the characteristics of these new governing arrangements.

As was previously alluded to, fragmentation has resulted in a variety of actors, including those from the private and voluntary sector playing an increased role in new governance arrangements, policy making and implementation. In the local governance context, Leach & Percy-Smith (2001) list those involved in governance as central and local government, other public authorities such as local health boards, quasi-public bodies, private businesses and organisations from the voluntary sector, for example community groups. With the range of actors involved in governance, a common theme of the literature is a blurring of boundaries between public, private and voluntary sectors. Associated with this, Stoker (1998) believes that in areas where state influence has receded, greater responsibilities have been placed on private and voluntary sectors. However, while Newman (2001) accepts that the depth of state power has receded, she reasons that this has been replaced with an increased breadth of state power which is associated with intervention into areas in which government

[4] Contrary to this Bevir & Rhodes (2003) suggest that governance may only represent a new perspective from which to study existing governing arrangements.

has not previously been involved. Furthermore, Daly (2003) suggests that to compensate for the loss of its direct control, government has reinforced its control over centrally distributed resources.

Although governance literature emphasises the plurality of actors involved, governance itself can be distinguished from pluralism by the relationships that exist between these actors. Rather than mediating between interests, government now forms relationships with other organisations that are characterised by power dependence (Stoker, 1998). Much of the power dependence is based upon the need to share resources. As Leach & Percy-Smith (2001, p147) state 'local governance requires a wide range of resources which are not equally distributed between organisations'. Such resources include authority, capital, legitimacy, information as well as, potentially, social capital (Leach & Percy-Smith, 2001). Rhodes (1999) suggests that these resources are used by organisations in 'game-like' interactions in order to gain influence in new governance relationships. These themes will be revisited in other sections throughout the remainder of the chapter.

Due to the uneven distribution of resources, authors suggest that no one organisation dominates the relationships that underpin new modes of governance. Therefore, these relationships are, at least to a certain extent, autonomous (Stoker, 1998). However, a number of authors suggest that government retains a key role in attempting to 'steer' the governance and direction of policy. At all levels, 'steering' requires government to use new skills and methods of intervention (Leach & Percy-Smith, 2001).

Rhodes (2000b) and Stoker (2000) both identify a number of approaches that government can take to 'steer' policy within the changed governance context. Instrumentalist approaches emphasis government's use of its special position to exercise authority within the relationships that characterise 'new' forms of governance (Rhodes, 2000b). Examples of this approach given by Stoker (2000) include using government finance to achieve particular outcomes and developing monitoring mechanisms that

allow direct intervention if necessary. Government could also alter governance structures using, for example, the creation of new agencies to focus on a particular issue (Stoker, 2000; Rhodes, 2000b). Alternatively, interactional approaches involve more co-operative methods such as persuasion and communication in order to develop shared goals. These methods of governance share much in common with the 'technologies' of government identified in the neo-Foucaultian literature on governmentality. Identifying the key concepts of governmentality will be the focus of the following section.

3.2.4 Governmentality

The analytical concept of governmentality, based primarily on work by Michel Foucault, has been the subject of relatively recent development. However, there is a distinction in the literature between those theorists, such as Foucault himself and Nikolas Rose, who suggest governmentality is a concept that can be used to analyse governing systems throughout the 20th century (and beyond) and those who mainly identify its applicability to the governmental contexts that exist at present. Authors writing in the second tradition recognise many features of the fragmentation of the public realm identified in the governance literature (e.g. Raco & Imrie, 2000).

Despite the similarity in descriptions of the underlying terrain of government, governmentality moves beyond the governance literature in focusing on *how* government operates in a fragmented public realm (MacKinnon, 2000; Raco & Imrie 2000, Rose, 1999). As a result, Foucault and other authors claim that governmentality introduces an 'alternative analytic of power' to those traditionally presented (Rose & Miller, 1992, p174). Using this power, 'government seeks not to govern society per se, but to promote individual and institutional conduct that is consistent with government objectives' (Raco & Imrie, 2000, p2191).

Shaping the conduct of individuals and institutions is central to governmentality. Rose & Miller (1992, p174) suggest that governments

attempt to ‘shape the beliefs and conduct of others in desired directions by acting upon their will, their circumstances or their environment’. Similarly, Raco & Imrie (2000, p2193) identify processes that seek to ‘institutionalise sets of norms, assumptions, and more widely defined discourses of thinking’. Thus, in Foucault’s (commonly reproduced) own words, governmentality is concerned with the ‘conduct of conduct’. In this analysis, government is involved in ‘governing at a distance’ where decentralisation is combined with increasing central control (MacKinnon, 2000).

The explanation of governmental shaping of the ‘conduct of conduct’ is based upon political rationalities, governmental programmes and technologies. Political rationalities concern ‘broad discourses’ regarding the nature and role of government and the governed (O’Malley et al., 1997; Raco & Imrie, 2000). Rose & Miller (1992) expand on this suggesting there are three ‘regularities’ to different political rationalities. First, political rationalities are characterised by having a particular moral form regarding the principles underpinning government and a conception of its powers, duties and limits. Second, the epistemological character of political rationalities is based on a conception of the ‘nature of the objects to be governed’ (Rose & Miller, 1992, p179). Finally, political rationalities have distinctive discourses, or idioms, that provide the basis for political action (Rose & Miller, 1992). Thought of in this way, our understanding of the role of government in a market-economy and fragmented public realm represents the dominance of a particular political rationality.

Connected to the idea of political rationalities are conceptions of governable spaces. Rose (1999, p33) suggests that governance ‘becomes possible only through the discursive mechanisms that represent the domain to be governed as an intelligible field with specific limits and characteristics’. Governable space may not only be geographical areas, such as local authority areas, but also groups of specific organisations, such as schools, or sections of society, for example young people. Government’s modelling and knowledge of particular spaces is crucial to underpinning its power to promote certain types of conduct within them (Rose, 1999).

The understanding of political rationalities and governable spaces then shape particular governmental programmes (MacKinnon, 2000). Specifically, Rose (1999) suggests that there is a process of 'translation' from the generalities of political rationalities to the specifics of governmental programmes. This is not to say that there is a clear relationship between the two as Rose (1999, p51) describes the process of translation as an 'imperfect mechanism and one that is subject to innumerable pressures and distortions'. Governmental programmes are associated with particular 'problems' in specific governable spaces (Rose & Miller, 1992; MacKinnon, 2000). For example, the promotion of local partnerships could be identified as a governmental programme to address the need for joined-up working to address, so called, 'wicked issues'. Thus, as Raco & Imrie (2000) comment more generally about governmental programmes, the present government's focus on partnerships would be a purposive attempt to mould particular governmental spaces and conduct within them.

Simply understood, governmental technologies are the 'mechanisms, techniques and procedures through which programmes are activated' (MacKinnon, 2000, p296). Beyond this description, both Rose (1999) and MacKinnon (2000, p297) emphasise the complexity of the 'heterogeneous array' of governmental technologies. Rose (1999, p54), in particular, explains that no one technology is used to enact a specific governmental programme and, conversely, a distinct technology may be 'traversed by a variety of programmatic aspirations'. Authors suggest a number of 'new' governmental technologies that have been adopted in the context of the fragmented or congested state. Of particular interest with respect to this study is MacKinnon's (2000) identification of bidding processes as a technology that promotes conduct in line with governmental priorities. Furthermore, in local governance, the widespread adoption of auditing, benchmarking and increased regulation are viewed as allowing local governments limited additional freedoms while being subject to greater central control (Rose & Miller, 1992; Raco & Imrie, 2000; MacKinnon, 2000). These analyses thus return the discussion of governmentality full circle to

the ideas of ‘regulated autonomy’ and shaping institutional conduct with which this subsection commenced.

3.3 Specific Theories and Concepts related to Partnership and Collaboration

Although the concepts examined in the previous section obviously have relevance to the examination of partnership and collaboration, they do not directly aid analysis of forms of partnership and collaboration. Moreover, the concepts do not provide comprehensive insights into other important features within partnerships and collaborative arrangements that may also influence policy processes and outputs. Concepts that will enhance such an analysis are considered in this section.

3.3.1 Policy Networks

The discussion of the literature on policy networks will begin by examining its links with the theoretical concepts examined thus far in this chapter. Following this the investigation of the main aspects of policy network theory will begin with the description of different types of policy networks that have been identified. Subsequently, a review of the influence of policy network structures and agencies on the policy process will be followed by a description of a relatively recent model of policy networks developed by Marsh & Smith (2000): the dialectical approach. The section will conclude with a consideration of policy network formation and change.

A major complexity within the literature is based on the divergence between policy networks as a mode of governance and as an (inter-)organisational form (an idea first introduced in Section 3.2.2). This section will mainly focus on policy networks as an (inter-)organisational form and, similarly, on policy networks as an ‘analytical perspective’ rather than as a significant change in the ‘structure of the polity’ (Marsh, 1998a, p8). This is the perspective commonly adopted in the United Kingdom-based literature which has studied policy networks at a sectoral or sub-sectoral level of central

government. As a result, policy networks are commonly empirically examined in connection to issues relevant to particular policy areas. However, as Marsh & Rhodes (1992) and Smith (1993) suggest, policy networks can also exist and be studied at local levels of government as John & Cole (1998) demonstrate in their studies of Leeds and Lille.

Policy Network Characteristics

An examination of the characteristics of policy networks described by authors is the most appropriate starting point for any consideration of the concept. In fact, a commonly reproduced, and widely accepted, description of these characteristics is included in Marsh & Rhodes' (1992) typology of policy networks (adapted version reproduced in Table 2 overleaf). This typology differentiates policy networks by four main dimensions of membership, integration, resources and power. These dimensions are further sub-divided as shown in Table 2. Except for integration, it is notable that these dimensions mainly focus on structural aspects of policy networks. This reflects the essential structural nature of policy networks literature, as identified by Marsh (1998a). Daugbjerg & Marsh (1998) implicitly recognise that relationships within policy networks may be inter-personal as well as structural, although this is not a major facet of the literature as a whole. This lacuna will be addressed in the subsequent section (2.4.3) on collaborative capacity and advantage.

At either extreme of the Marsh & Rhodes' (1992) typology are policy networks termed issue networks and policy communities. At the outset, it is notable that Smith (1993) emphasises that typically those policy networks which have been studied empirically do not display all the described characteristics of either a policy community or issue network. In fact, Rhodes & Marsh (1992) describe three types of policy network, professional networks, intergovernmental networks and producer networks, which exist between the extremes of policy communities and issue networks. However, other than being descriptive terms these three types of policy network have

received little focus from authors and it is policy communities and issue networks that are most commonly discussed in the policy network literature.

Table 2: Types and Characteristics of Policy Networks

Dimension	Policy Network	Issue Network
Membership		
Number of participants	Very limited number, some groups consciously excluded.	Large
Type of interest	Economic and / or professional interests dominate	Encompasses range of affected interests
Integration		
Frequency of interaction	Frequent, high-quality, interaction of all groups on all matters related to policy issues	Contacts fluctuate in frequency and interaction
Continuity	Membership, values and outcomes persistent over time	Access fluctuates significantly
Consensus	All participants share basic values and accept the legitimacy of the outcomes	Some agreement exists, but conflict is ever present
Resources		
Distribution of resources (in network)	All participants have resources. Basic relationship is an exchange relationship.	Some participants may have resources, but they are limited.
Internal distribution	Hierarchical; leaders can deliver members	Varied, variable distribution and capacity to regulate members.
Power		
Power	There is a balance of power amongst members. Although one group may dominate, it must be a positive sum game if community is to persist	Unequal powers, reflecting unequal resources and unequal access – zero-sum game.

Source: Adapted from Marsh & Rhodes (1992, p251)

In the typology, policy communities are characterised as having stable, close knit relationships between a small number of actors who share common values. In particular, government is commonly a key, and often founder, member of policy communities (Smith, 1993). The restricted membership of policy communities is a topic that has been given attention by a number of authors who have suggested that other interests are excluded by a variety of mechanisms. At the level of macro-analysis, structured inequalities in society may be reproduced in the membership of policy communities (Daugbjerg & Marsh, 1998). Thus, those interests which frequently have most power in society, such as economic and professional interests, are the most common members alongside government in policy communities (Smith, 1993; Daugbjerg & Marsh, 1998).

The small group of policy community members not only share policy values but have further common features which act to exclude other interests. Laffin (1986) states that policy communities often have a shared ideology, which he calls a ‘normative order’, that ensures that certain issues and interests are excluded from the policy making agenda. This is just one reason why policy communities do not encompass competing interest groups (Smith, 1993). A complementary exclusionary factor is the ‘rules of the game’ adopted by the existing members. These ‘rules’ govern the behaviour of members of the policy community and thus exclude those groups who do not follow such rules. So, for example, Smith (1993) believes that, as in corporatism, radical groups are excluded because membership precludes campaigning on issues outwith the confines of the policy community.

Conversely, issue networks are diffuse groupings with a large membership which may fluctuate significantly over time. As such, issues networks are comparatively open structures that often encompass a broad spectrum of actors in a particular policy area (Smith, 1993). Interestingly, Smith (1993) suggests that issue networks may exist in policy areas that are either important to a wide range of actors or, alternatively, are of little importance to government (who would otherwise try to restrict access to the network).

Whatever the policy area, issue networks may be more concerned with policy consultation rather than policy making (Marsh, 1998a).

Even in policy consultation, there exists little consensus between members of an issue network. Discussions regarding policy may be highly political due to the lack of shared values between members (Smith, 1993; Marsh, 1998a). Communication within issue networks may also vary over time and between particular members (Smith, 1993). Furthermore, there are 'unequal power relationships in which many participants may have few resources, little access and no alternative' (Marsh, 1998a, p14). As a result of all these factors, the relationships between members within issue networks are commonly zero-sum (Marsh, 1998a).

The effect of policy networks on policy processes

The discussion of the characteristics of policy networks in the last section does not go beyond the critiques of Dowding (1995) and Van Waarden (1992) that the concept of policy networks merely offers a 'metaphor' for, or 'image' of, reality. However, throughout the literature on policy networks there is a

> *basic assumption […] that the existence of policy networks, which reflect the relative status or power of particular interests in a policy area, influences (though does not determine) policy outcomes*
>
> (Borzel, 1998, p316)

Most generally, for example, Marsh (1998a) suggests that policy continuity is commonly associated with tight networks (similar to policy communities) whereas policy discontinuity is more likely in looser networks (that are more similar to issue networks). It has been recognised that the policy network literature focuses less on the relationship between policy networks and policy outcomes than it does on the characteristics of policy networks (Kickert & Koppenjam, 1997). However, the following section will provide an

overview of the literature available that examines how policy networks affect policy outcomes[5].

Recognising the need for an approach that emphasises the effect of agency, Daugbjerg & Marsh (1998, p67) suggest that within policy networks 'it is the behaviour of actors which leads to policy outcomes'. Smith (1993) also recognises it is the characteristics of actors in the policy network that determines the extent to which they can realise their policy preferences. In fact, many of the characteristics identified are the same as those identified in pluralist literature. For example, Marsh (1998b) suggests that the resources that actors bring to the network and the skill with which they are deployed are important when assessing the actor's influence over policy outcomes. Dunleavy & O'Leary (1987) when writing about pluralism identified the very same features as contributing to interest group power. In fact, resource dependency and exchange is the most commonly cited variable that can be used to explain the relationships within, and the resulting outcomes of, policy networks (e.g. John, 1998; Dowding, 1995; Smith, 1993).

Daugbjerg & Marsh (1998) are among those authors who suggest that micro-level theories can be utilised within the broader framework provided by the policy network concept to explain the effect that actors have on policy outcomes. Authors have suggested that Advocacy Coalition Frameworks and Rational Choice Theory are among those theories that could be utilised in this way to explain the effect of agency (Dowding, 1995; Marsh & Smith, 2000; Daugbjerg & Marsh, 1998). Such theories share with the majority of the policy network literature a focus on bargaining and negotiation between actors motivated by a degree of self-interest (Peters, 1998a) and, in particular, Daugbjerg & Marsh (1998, p70) criticise Rational Choice Theory for its 'methodological individualism'. Theories, such as that of collaborative advantage (examined in the following Section 3.3.3), may prove to have

[5] It is worth noting here that throughout the policy networks literature the term 'policy outcomes' is commonly and implicitly taken to mean resultant policies i.e. outputs rather than the outcomes or impact of such policies. The term 'outcomes' will continue to be used in this section as it is most commonly used in the literature.

more utility in examining the role of agencies in partnerships and collaborations, forms in which there are expectations of common interests.

Despite the recognition that agencies determine policy outcomes, the concept of policy networks remains an essentially structural one and authors have argued against a sole focus on micro-level analysis (Marsh & Smith, 2000). Marsh (1998a) also suggests that any explanation of policy outcomes which focuses solely on policy networks' structures or actors can only be a 'partial' explanation. So, for example, while Daugbjerg & Marsh (1998, p67) recognise the influence of actors on policy outcomes, as shown by their previously quoted statement, they go on to qualify this by adding that the actors 'behave in structured contexts'. The following paragraphs will focus on the structural aspects of policy networks that affect policy outcomes.

First, it is important to note that there are limits to the effect of policy network structure on policy outcomes. These limits are best described by Marsh & Stoker (1995, p293) who state that 'networks are political structures which constrain and facilitate, but do not determine, policy outcomes'. The idea that networks constrain, or limit, the range of possible policy outcomes is highlighted by a number of authors. For example, Smith (1993) believes that the shared ideology and norms described earlier are an integral structural feature of a policy community. Within a policy network these features may then both exclude particular issues from consideration and also limit the range of possible policy solutions to a particular problem (Marsh & Smith, 2000). Furthermore, because actors operate within these constraints their interpretation or perception of these policy network structures will also affect the way they articulate and pursue their policy preferences (Marsh, 1998b; Hay, 1998).

Although acknowledging the potential influence of policy network structure on policy outcomes, Damgaard (2006, p676) calls for greater understanding of the structural context of policy networks. She suggests that structural classifications of policy networks do not 'explain why structurally and functionally similar policy networks translate into rather different forms of

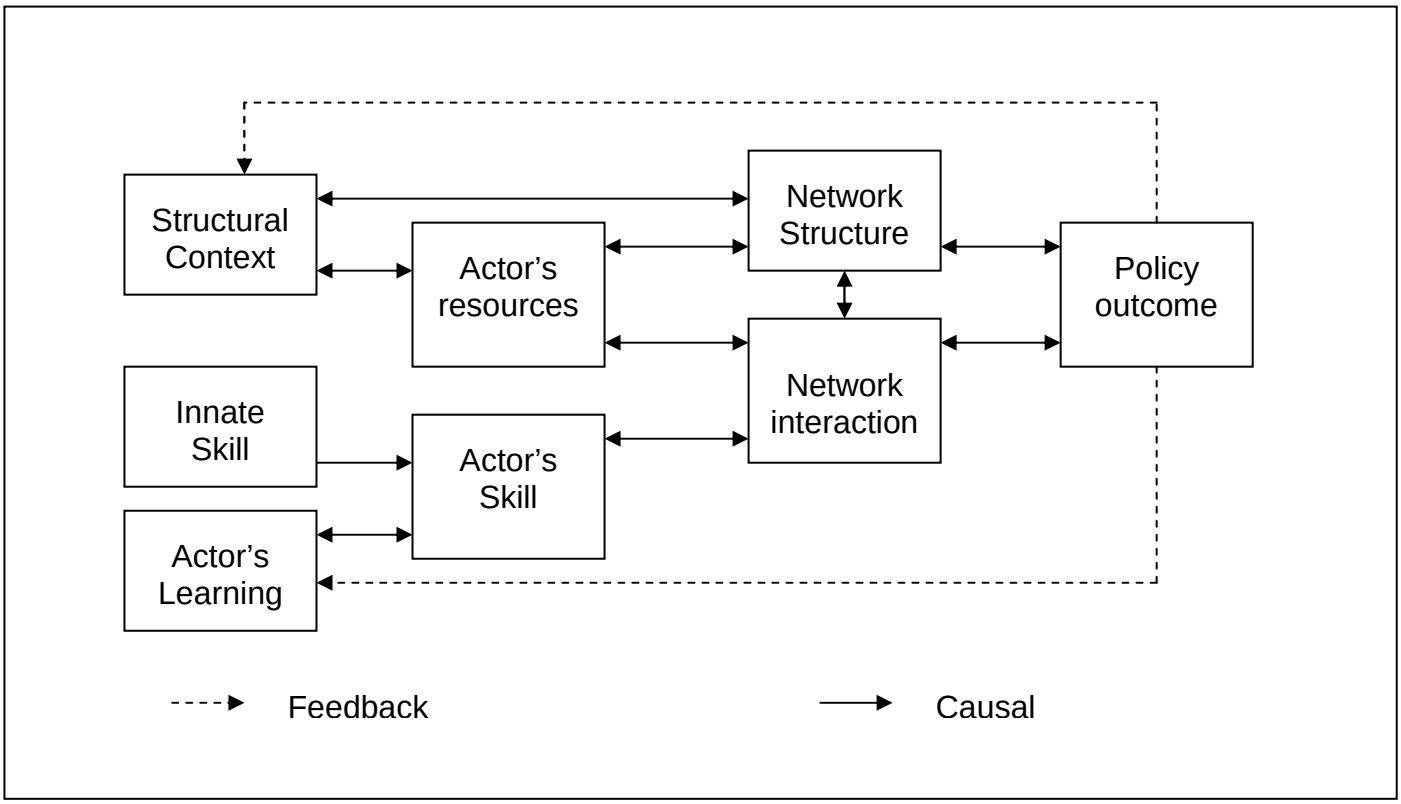
governing in the same policy field'. Rhodes & Marsh (1992) believe that the structure of policy networks reflects wider patterns of power distribution. Therefore, it is with respect to the structural context of policy networks that the conceptions of power and governmentality considered earlier in the chapter can be gainfully applied to the policy networks concept. Moreover, Smith (1993) takes the point regarding power further by highlighting the role of policy network structure in the cyclical reproduction of inequalities of power distribution. He argues that since particular interests are favoured by policy network structures which also affect policy outcomes, then these outcomes are likely to strengthen the power of already privileged groups.

Individual authors writing on policy networks, until recently, have focused on either the importance of agency or structure in explaining policy outcomes. However, in a significant development of policy network theory, Marsh & Smith (2000) introduce the idea of dialectical relationships between all the variables in policy networks, including structure and agency variables. A dialectical relationship in Marsh & Smith's (2000, p5) words is 'an interactive relationship between two variables in which each affects the other in a continuing iterative process'. Marsh & Smith's (2000) model of the relationships between variables in policy networks is shown in Figure 1 (overleaf).

Marsh & Smith (2000) do not explicitly explain many of the relationships between variables in the model. This is understandable since some of the relationships, for example between the macro- structural context and network structure have been developed elsewhere in the literature and outlined earlier in this section. Similarly, comment has also been made with regard to the influence of an actor's skill and resources on policy outcomes. What the model does add, however, is the idea that relationships do not operate in one direction only. This is particularly relevant with regard to the relationships between, firstly, actors and network structure and secondly, policy outcomes and policy networks.

As outlined previously, network structures have a constraining effect on the policy choices available to actors. Marsh & Smith (2000) also begin to explain the reverse relationship by which actors influence the network structures within which they operate. Thus by their interactions within networks, actors define and alter the network structure (Marsh & Smith, 2000, p7). A similar point is made by Hay (1998, p44) who states that network structures are 'recursively reconstituted through the process and practice of networking'.

Figure 1: Dialectical Model of Policy Networks



Source: Marsh & Smith (2000, p10)

The other relationship that Marsh & Smith (2000) begin to elucidate for the first time is the effect that policy outcomes have on the networks that influence their development. Marsh & Smith (2000) provide evidence that this happens in three ways. First, a policy outcome may result in a change in network membership or, at least, the balance of resources within the network. Furthermore, policy outcomes may have an effect on wider distributions of power that, as has been shown previously, have an effect on

network structure and membership. Finally, actors within the network can learn from the experience of negotiating policy outcomes which will affect their interactions in the future. Marsh & Smith's (2000) description of such effects is, understandably, brief and this is certainly an area of policy network theory that would benefit from further research.

Policy Network Change

In fact, a similar point regarding the need for further research is made by a number of authors about explanation of change in policy networks more generally (e.g. Rhodes & Marsh, 1992; Smith, 1993). Further, it could be commented that even when addressing network change, authors do not define what is meant by the term. Network change is often investigated from the perspective of explaining changes in policy outcomes rather than concentrating on the specifics of the network change itself (e.g. Marsh, 1998a). Hay (1998) is alone in identifying different types of network change on a continuum from his description of 'tinkering', through membership change, agenda change to a total change of network regime. Other literature does not benefit from such a rigorous analysis of types of network change.

There is however a considerable focus in the literature on the reasons for network change. Similar to the distinction between structure and agency, authors tend to focus on either endogenous or exogenous factors. Rhodes & Marsh (1992) identify three main exogenous causes of network change. Advancements in knowledge can influence policy networks, particularly if the network is concerned with technical issues. More generally, changes in the economic context and wider political changes can force alteration in the structure of, and actors within, policy networks. Despite such factors, policy communities are viewed as such strong structures that they may be able to withstand or mediate external pressure without substantial alterations in their characteristics (Rhodes & Marsh, 1992). As a result, policy communities are associated with policy continuity and, therefore, Smith (1993) suggests, are structures which governments prefer to develop.

Moreover, exogenous factors may not *directly* bring about change in policy networks. As Daugbjerg & Marsh (1998, p187) note 'exogenous factors do affect policy networks but it is how that context is interpreted and negotiated by the members of the network that affects outcomes'. It is possible to see the similarity between this point and the previously discussed idea that it is actors' perceptions of network structure that affects policy outcomes. Other 'actor centred', endogenous factors resulting in policy network change include change in resource dependencies (Dowding, 1994; Daugbjerg & Marsh, 1998) and change in the strategic goals of network members (Hay, 1998). Internal negotiation within the network can also result in change (Marsh & Rhodes, 1992). Changes in such individual features could, however, be the result of contextual changes. Future development of theories of policy network change, therefore, may focus on a dialectical relationship between exogenous and endogenous factors.

To conclude, this section has considered theory on policy networks, a concept which is commonly used in public policy analysis (Marsh, 1998a). However, there are weaknesses within the concept of policy networks which have been alluded to within the section and highlighted by particular authors. One weakness, connected to the view of policy networks as sites of interest mediation, concerns the focus of the literature on development of policy (termed as policy outcomes). As a result, consideration of the delivery of policy and the outcomes of policy is neglected. A second weakness results from the lack of focus on both characteristics of particular agencies and the relationships between them within policy networks. This is a point recognised by Peters (1998a). The following two sections which discuss regime theory and the concepts of collaborative capacity and advantage are intended to address these weaknesses.

3.3.2 Regime Theory

Regime theory, or urban regime theory as it is often referred to, has been described as being the dominant theory in discourses on local politics (Imbroscio, 1998; Mossberger & Stoker, 2001). The theory is widely acknowledged to have been originally developed in the work of Stone (1989, 1993) and Elkin (1987) on regimes in Atlanta and Dallas respectively. The development of the theory in American contexts has led to critiques of the applicability of regime theory to the United Kingdom context. These critiques are based on queries as to whether regimes in the form described by Stone (1993) and Elkin (1987) could exist in the United Kingdom due to the different nature of local government in this country (for a fuller examination of these points see Ward (1997) and Davies (1997)). However, for the purposes of this study, it is not the existence of regimes in the United Kingdom context that is at issue but the additionality that the theory may bring to examination of partnership and collaboration.

In particular, a number of strengths of regime theory complement identified weaknesses in the literature on policy networks. Compared to the structural emphasis of policy networks, the role of agency and the nature of relationships between actors are given primacy in regime theory (Ward, 1996; Davies, 1997). Regime theory also emphasises the purpose of collaborative action and achievement of goals (Stoker & Mossberger, 1994; Stone, 2002) to an extent that is missing in policy network literature. The following examination of key concepts in the regime theory literature will focus, to a large extent, on these issues.

Amongst those authors who have written on regime theory there is some disagreement on what constitutes the fundamental aspects of the theory. This could be attributed to the fact that the theory has been, in the main, developed inductively from a variety of case studies in different countries. After some consideration of regime theory literature, Mossberger and Stoker (2001, p829) suggest that regimes have four core properties:

- *partners drawn from government and non-government sources, requiring but not limited to business participation*
- *collaboration based on social production – the need to bring together fragmented resources for the power to accomplish tasks*
- *identifiable policy agendas that can be related to the composition of the participants in the coalition*
- *a longstanding pattern of cooperation rather than a temporary coalition.*

These core properties provide a useful starting point for the discussion of regime theory. The following discussion will take each of these points in turn and attempt to illuminate the differences in viewpoints between authors.

The range of members of a regime and their motivations for membership are issues that have been contested. The majority of authors view business involvement, to whatever extent, as a key facet of regime theory. The requirement of business involvement is one reason why authors have suggested that regime theory is not transferable to the United Kingdom context (Ward, 1997). However, compared to policy network literature, the characteristics of regime members, and in particular their resources and capacities, is examined in greater depth in regime theory.

In terms of capacity, leadership is seen to be important in developing the co-operation required in a regime. Member organisations also need to have staff capacity to sustain relationships (Stone, 1993, 2002; DiGaetano & Klemanski, 1993). In terms of resources, Stone (1993, p17) suggests that collectively members of a regime must be able to 'mobilise resources commensurate with its main policy agenda'. Governmental agencies within a regime count political legitimacy and statutory powers amongst their institutional resources. Echoing some Marxist theory, business' position in regimes is assured by its access to financial capital (Mossberger & Stoker, 2001). Of particular interest to this study, Stoker & Mossberger (1994, 1998) also suggest that the addition of 'non-local' resources can significantly

enhance the capacity of regimes and Ward (1997) specifically identifies that an impetus for formation of regimes could be requirements for ‘institutional co-operation’ in applications for centralised funding.

As alluded to in the governance literature, regime theory is based on the understanding that the resources and capacity of individual organisations are insufficient for unilateral action (Ward, 1997) and it is through a regime that resources are combined to gain the power to achieve shared outcomes. The ‘social production’ of shared outcomes is at the core of Stone’s conceptualisation of regime theory and is linked to the third of Mossberger & Stoker’s (2001) core regime properties. Reflecting the previous discussion of power, regimes, therefore, are associated with ‘power to’ which offers an alternate position to the policy networks literature which could be identified as having a focus on ‘power over’.

Among authors on regime theory, Stone in particular focuses on relationships between the interests of regime members, the productive nature of regimes and their longevity. Involvement in regimes encourages members to adopt goals that are achievable rather than idealistic and Stone (1993) contends that this feature, in itself, lessens differences between members. Achieving these desired outcomes also ensures the stability of internal relationships within the regime. Furthermore, regimes produce what Stone (1993, p19) calls ‘selective incentives and small opportunities’ which may benefit those outside a regime. The production of such benefits may discourage actors who are not part of the regime from attempting to remove and replace the existing governing coalition.

These factors link to the fourth property of regimes described by Mossberger & Stoker (2001), that of long-term co-operation between actors in regimes. The common acceptance by authors that regimes are ‘informal yet relatively stable groups’ (Stone, 1989, p4) is similar to Marsh & Rhodes (1992) description of policy communities. These similarities are enhanced by the recognition that regimes are non-hierarchical entities (Stoker & Mossberger, 1994). However, despite the agreement over the long-term relationships that

exist within regimes, Stoker & Mossberger (1994) interestingly identify three different types of relationships between regime members. The first of these is termed ‘political communion’ between actors that naturally share similar goals, values and norms. Alternatively, Stoker & Mossberger (1994) term relationships where there is some disagreement between actors, who otherwise have relatively high levels of congruence, as ‘political partnerships’. In these relationships, disagreements are resolved by negotiation and conciliation. Finally, in relationships characterised by ‘competitive agreement’ actors have significantly different characteristics and interests but recognise the need to work together to reach objectives that they do share (Stoker & Mossberger, 1994).

Categorising Regimes

The discussion of regimes thus far has mainly concentrated on generic features of regime theory. However, as a result of empirical observation and hypothetical theorisation, both Stone (1993) and Stoker & Mossberger (1994) provide notable and similar categorisations of different types of regimes. Stone’s (1993) typology is underpinned by previous work by Stone, Orr & Imbroscio (1991). Table 3 (Overleaf) summarises the main defining features of both typologies. The following discussion will expand on this table through considering both of these typologies.

In contrast to the typology of policy networks described earlier, both Stoker & Mossberger’s (1994) and Stone’s (1993) typologies differentiate regimes by their overall purpose. Stone’s (1993) first type of ‘maintenance’ regime is alternatively termed an ‘organic regime’ by Stoker & Mossberger (1994). This type of regime is distinguished by making little or no attempt to alter the existing local status quo. Instead such regimes limit themselves to the ‘provision of routine services’ (Stone, Orr & Imbroscio, 1991, p229).

As maintenance and organic regimes do not attempt to bring about significant change they require little in the way of private resources (Stone, 1993). Therefore, the involvement of non-governmental actors in such

regimes will be minimal. Stoker & Mossberger (1994), in particular, identify that these regimes often seek to act independently of non-local forces and without non-local resources, such as those provided by central government. Furthermore, in order to maintain the status quo, maintenance and organic regimes will often actively exclude particular local groups from the political process (Stone, Orr & Imbroscio, 1991).

Table 3: Summary of regime typologies

	Stoker & Mossberger's (1994) Regime Types			
	Organic	Instrumental	Symbolic	
	Stone's (1993) Regime Types			
Defining Characteristics	Maintenance	Development	Middle Class Progressive	Lower Class Opportunity
Purpose	Maintenance of status quo	Development of economic projects	Achievement of particular social outcomes	Development of opportunities for lower social classes
Membership	Exclusion and limited involvement of non-government actors	Business and local government – exclusionary to other actors	Inclusive of wide range of actors and citizens	
Stability / Longevity	Stable	Stable	Unstable – difficult to form and maintain	
Relationship to Business	Business acceptance of the regime	Strong business involvement	Business acceptance due to benefits received	Unclear

The second class of regimes identified by Stone (1993) and Stoker & Mossberger (1994) are termed 'development' and 'instrumental' respectively. Stone, Orr & Imbroscio (1991) term this type of regime a 'business centered activist' which gives a better indication of the actors in the coalition along with its purpose. These types of regimes promote economic development, often centred on land redevelopment, through the

combination of the financial resources held by business and local government's statutory powers (Stone, 1993; Stone, Orr & Imbroscio, 1991). Between them, particular business interests and political leaders are often able to supply all the resources required to attain achievable outcomes (Stoker & Mossberger, 1994). The visibility of these outcomes and the production of small incentives ensure that such regimes have proven strong and durable (Stone, 1993).

Stoker & Mossberger's (1994) third type of regime, a 'symbolic' regime, encompasses both Stone's (1993) 'middle class progressive' and 'lower class opportunity' types. These two types described by Stone (1993) differ primarily in the degree to which they prioritise particular outcomes and demonstrate particular characteristics. Stoker & Mossberger (1994) describe symbolic regimes as driven by a particular ideology or vision for the locality in which they are based. Similarly, Stone (1993) identifies that these types of regime are driven by the desire to achieve social outcomes, for example through education, either for the general population or specifically for the lower classes.

By their very nature, the social outcomes desired within symbolic, middle class progressive and lower class opportunity regimes ensure that relations between the regime and business differ from other types of regimes. Business may be less of a voluntary partner in these regimes and a mixture of incentives and restrictions must be applied to garner business compliance (Stone, 1993). Furthermore, due to the nature of these regimes' objectives, a wider variety of actors beyond local government and business have to be included in the coalition (Stone, 1993) and the regime may be dependent on non-local economic and political factors to a greater extent (Stoker & Mossberger, 1994). These regimes also rely on the capacity of members to mobilise public support, particularly in the communities that may benefit from the achievement of the desired outcomes (Stone, 1993). The level of co-ordination required to hold together the wide variety of actors involved in such regimes means that they are less stable than other regime types. In fact, Stone, Orr and Imbroscio (1991) suggest that the difficulties of co-

ordination inherent in a ‘lower class opportunity expansion’ regime are so great that it may remain a purely hypothetical, normative model.

Although this has been a relatively brief overview of regime theory, it is suggested that the concept has potential to support the analysis of partnership and collaboration in this study. Due to the emphasis on business involvement and the understanding that regimes operate across a number of policy issues in a locality, it is unlikely that actual regimes will be identified in this study. However, the analytical power of the concept lies in understanding how agencies bring together resources in order to deliver particular outcomes, a facet which will has potential utility for understanding partnerships and collaboration.

3.3.3 Collaborative Capacity and Collaborative Advantage

Linked with the strengths of regime theory, other authors have considered the role of agents and how they may collaborate to achieve desired outcomes. Sullivan et al (2006) identify the importance of these topics by stating that examination of collaboration should not solely consider structural forms but also behaviours, relationships and cultures. Such features are considered in the theory of collaborative advantage proposed by Huxham & Vangen (2005). Their theory describes how collaboration may lead to positive outcomes, termed collaborative advantage or alternatively lead to collaborative inertia. Similarly, Sullivan & Skelcher (2002) identify, what they term as, collaborative capacity[6] as important in achieving outcomes. They suggest that collaborative capacity may be a facet of individuals and organisations as well as being present within the processes of collaborative working. The following section will consider individual, organisation and process characteristics in turn although it should be recognised that are significant areas of overlap between the three.

[6] Huxham & Vangen (2005), Sullivan & Skelcher (2002) and Sullivan (2005) all use the term collaboration and so the convention will be adopted here. However, it should be recognised that the concepts that they examine may apply equally to partnerships.

In terms of individuals, Ranade & Hudson (2003) recognise that effective collaboration requires different skills and qualities to hierarchical modes of co-ordination. In general, Miller & Ahmed (2000) suggest that the management of collaboration requires skill, patience, commitment and time. More specifically, Miller & Ahmed's (2000) identification of the importance of management of collaboration links with a significant focus in the literature regarding the significance of individual leadership within collaborations.

Although, commonly, specific organisations are assigned as leaders within collaborations, in practice it is often individuals who are associated with collaborative leadership (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002). Leadership is a theme that is extensively considered by Huxham & Vangen (2000, 2005). As well as identifying the need for facilitative leadership, as suggested by Ranade & Hudson (2003), Huxham & Vangen (2000) also suggest that this needs to be balanced with manipulative leadership, or 'collaborative thuggery' as they term it. These two types of leadership reflect the distinction between 'foxes' and 'lions' suggested by Pareto (1935, 1966) in the pluralist literature. Facilitative leadership may involve embracing, empowering, involving and mobilising members of collaborations (Vangen & Huxham, 2003). Alternatively, manipulative leadership may involve controlling the collaborative agenda and playing politics between members (Vangen & Huxham, 2003). Establishing collaborations and encouraging individuals and organisations to be involved may also require 'a degree of manipulation' (Huxham & Vangen, 2005, p184).

The literature also reflects on the different formal, organisational and collaborative positions that individuals may hold. Huxham & Vangen (2005) differentiate between individuals who represent organisations in collaborations and individuals who are members of collaborations despite there being little interest in the collaboration from within their organisation. Similar to this second case, Ranade & Hudson (2003) identify that commonly collaborations may be marginal to the main purpose of organisations. Where this is the case, individuals committed to the collaboration may need to display leadership to 'secure organisational

ownership of and commitment to the collaborative endeavour' (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002, p107).

Individuals may alternatively act as a 'boundary spanner' (also termed a 'reticulist') working across different organisations in a collaboration. Boundary spanners may be external to the organisations that formally comprise a collaboration and be specifically employed to fulfil such a role (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). Boundary spanners may have different roles in different phases of collaboration including working to establish initial links between potential members, establishing the collaboration and, subsequently, facilitating or co-ordinating its operation (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002). Ranade & Hudson (2003) sound a note of caution in identifying that collaborations may become overly dependent on boundary spanners who subsequently move on. This problem links with one of the themes running through Huxham & Vangen's (2005) work: that of the constant changing nature of collaborations.

Sullivan et al. (2006) recognise that there is a focus in the literature on the skills required by individual members to be involved in collaboration rather than organisational capacity to do so. However, a few authors do present an organisation-focused perspective on collaboration. It is commonly held that 'from the point of view of individual organisations, collaboration may pose a threat' (Ranade & Hudson, 2003, p40). Organisations must possess sufficient resources and be prepared to invest them in collaborative arrangements with little certainty of positive outcomes (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002; Ranade & Hudson, 2003). Furthermore by being involved in collaboration, organisations may lose the freedom to act independently and the changing boundaries that this involves may cause conflict (Ranade & Hudson, 2003; Beech & Huxham, 2003). Linked to changes in the boundaries between organisations, Sullivan & Skelcher (2002) also identify existing organisational norms, practices and cultures as potential barriers to collaborative working. Organisations comprising of professionals may especially find collaboration a threat to existing power structures (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002).

Besides individual and organisation characteristics, the final facet of collaborative capacity, as Sullivan & Skelcher (2002) consider it, inheres in the processes of collaborative working. In their theory of collaborative advantage, Huxham & Vangen (2005) particularly focus on processes of developing shared aims and building trust between partners. Although, these two processes are strongly linked, each will now be considered in turn.

As Huxham & Vangen (2004) identify, literature on collaboration commonly suggests that the early development of shared aims between different members is required in order for collaborations to be effective. However, Huxham & Vangen (2005) identify that developing shared aims is more problematical and complex than is often asserted. They identify the paradox that although shared aims may be beneficial the 'possibility for collaborative advantage rests in most cases on drawing synergy from the differences between organisations' (Huxham & Vangen, 2005, p82). Furthermore, they suggest there may be differences between aims for a collaboration, the aims of an organisation with respect to the collaboration and individuals' aims for involvement (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). Individuals and organisations involved in a collaboration may also not fully disclose their aims to other collaborators.

Without agreeing clear aims at the outset, Huxham & Vangen (2005) identify that an alternative approach would be to undertake initial collaborative tasks with the view to developing clear aims as relationships develop. However, adopting this approach may lead to collaborations lacking direction (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). In fact, Huxham & Vangen (2005) suggest an approach that represents a middle way between the two extremes. This intermediate approach may involve reaching *enough* agreement or finding aims compatible with those of all collaborators as a basis for initial collaborative work.

Huxham & Vangen's (2005) commentary on building trust in collaboration is similar to that regarding shared aims in its identification of inherent complexities within the desired process. It also shares similarities with Goehler's (2000) self-reinforcing idea of 'intransitive power' outlined in Section 3.2.1. Again, a tension is identified between the common wisdom that 'trust is a precondition for successful collaboration' and, what they find as, the common practice that 'suspicion, rather than the trust is the starting point' (Huxham & Vangen, 2005, p66). Two factors are identified as important in the initial stages of a collaboration: the expectations that are held about other collaborators based on prior behaviour or reputation and there being sufficient trust between potential collaborators to be able to risk entering into a collaborative relationship (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). Thereafter, building trust may enter a positive feedback loop with successful achievement of outcomes leading to increased trust which in turn develops collaborative capacity to achieve outcomes (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). A similar point was identified earlier regarding capacity development within regimes. However, entering such a trust building loop by achieving initial 'small wins' may be problematic, especially for those collaborations instigated by external funders, for example, who may have high expectations from the outset regarding the delivery of outcomes (Huxham & Vangen, 2005).

Overall, this subsection on collaborative capacity and advantage has been based on the contributions of relatively few authors. This is partly because, within the literature on partnership and collaboration, there has been a relative lack of in-depth focus on individual and organisational characteristics and behaviours. Given this, some final comments from those authors who have studied such features of collaboration are valuable. As noted earlier, Huxham & Vangen (2005) identify that collaborations are fluid, changeable forms. As such, Sullivan et al. (2006) suggest that a learning culture is important to developing collaborative capacity. Perhaps more tangibly, authors identify the need for 'deliberative intervention' (Sullivan et al., 2006, p293) and constant nurturing (Huxham & Vangen, 2005) in order to develop ongoing, successful collaborations.

3.4 Specific research on partnership and collaboration

The literature on collaborative capacity and advantage can be seen to represent one theme within the more general literature on partnership and collaboration. Besides the focus on characteristics of collaborative agencies and their relationships, other themes within the literature focus on the definitional and theoretical issues related to partnership and collaboration, the association between partnership (and to a lesser extent collaboration) and particular modes of governance and the advantages and limitations of partnership as a mode of governance. This penultimate section of the chapter will consider literature on each of these elements in turn before reviewing research on partnership and collaboration in the particular fields of this study, namely education, PE, school and community sport.

3.4.1 Definitional and Theoretical Issues

Miller & Ahmed (2000, p29) suggest that the 'language of partnership is much abused as it dominates the landscape'. To an extent, this criticism could apply to some of the academic literature as well as to the policy and practice context at which it is directed. Similarly, Ling (2000, p82) comments that the literature on partnership suffers from 'methodological anarchy and definitional chaos'. Few studies specifically define the terms 'partnership' or 'collaboration'. For Raab (1992, p85) 'partnership is both a descriptive and normative term: it too is a myth that both describes and celebrates aspects of structure and interest intermediation'. As Whitehead (2007) suggests, however, there is an emphasis and general assumption within the literature regarding the formality of partnership structures.

The degree of formalisation is a feature that can be used to distinguish partnership from collaboration. Both Miller & Ahmed (2000) and Lowndes & Skelcher (1998) suggest that partnership is a specific, formalised type of collaborative relationship. Subsequently, Skelcher et al. (2005, p574) refine this position by suggesting that 'partnerships are located in the collaborative

space'. Moreover, Sullivan et al. (2006) also differentiate between the role of collaboration as a mechanism for joint action and the narrower focus on partnerships as a governing mechanism. The notion of partnerships as a mode of governance will be returned to later in this section.

These contributions that differentiate partnership from collaboration are supported by the implicit definition of the word 'partnership' utilised in a number of research studies. Most commonly, research has examined partnership structures such as local strategic partnerships and those for specific programmes such as New Deals for Communities and Health Action Zones (e.g. Davies, 2004; Lawless, 2004). Such studies commonly examine the local mechanisms of partnership in central government programmes. The effectiveness of such partnerships will be considered in the following subsection (2.5.2).

A final aspect in the literature on the structural form of partnership and collaboration is the proliferation of a number of suggested models of partnership. Given that categorisations of policy networks and regimes have been extensively examined previously in the chapter, a brief summary of such partnerships models will suffice at this point. It must also be noted that the models reviewed are, by no means, the only possible conceptualisations of partnership and collaboration.

In an early examination of partnership, MacKintosh (1992) distinguishes between types of partnership based on the desired outcomes of such relationships. One type of partnership may be based on desired *synergies* between different partners in order to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. A second type of partnership may be used by particular members to *transform* the objectives and cultures of other partners towards their own agendas. The final *budget enlargement* type of partnership is based on the acquisition of resources from external sources. These types of partnership may cross the distinctions between partnership and collaboration examined in previous paragraphs.

McDonald (2005) develops a theoretically dense model of partnerships based on Habermas' (1984, 1987) theory of communicative action and Newman's (2001) model of governance. Partnerships are differentiated by two dimensions, one between extremes of continuity and innovation, the other between central control and decentralisation. These dimensions provide four models of partnership: a flexible and adaptable *open systems model,* a strategic *rational goal model*, a *quasi-partnerships model* in which existing hierarchies remain and, finally, a *self-governance model* in which partnerships are an evolving process with little pre-determined 'trajectory'. Although not explicitly stated, these different models could encompass both partnerships as a form of governance and collaboration as a site for shared action. However, the complexity of the conceptualisation may limit its applicability.

More simply, and without identifying particular types, Ling (2000) suggests alternative ways in which partnerships may be differentiated. Firstly, partnerships may be distinguished by their *membership* which might compromise individuals and organisations drawn from the public, private or voluntary sectors. The *nature of relations* between these members, including the degree of formalisation as well as levels of equity and trust, can also be used to differentiate partnerships. Thirdly, different partnerships may have different *scales and boundaries.* Finally, issues such as the fit of partnerships with existing institutional architecture, the maturity of relationships and the level of resource dependency are brought together by Ling (2000) under the heading *context of partnership.* Unlike the two previous conceptualisations, Ling (2000) does not consider the role of partnerships as a distinguishing feature.

3.4.2 Partnership and Governance

A second major theme in the literature is the relationship between formal partnerships and specific modes of governance. Whitehead (2007, p6) advances one view within the partnership literature that 'the proliferation of partnerships appears to reflect many of the processes associated with the

purported transition from government to governance'. This is a view supported by Adshead (2006), for example, who also suggests that partnerships may represent an 'alternative' form of policy network.

The relationship between partnership and policy networks is one often considered by Chris Skelcher and associates. One perspective offered by Lowdnes & Skelcher (1998, p320) is that 'partnerships have a particular affinity with network modes of governance' although partnerships have a greater degree of formality (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002). However, Lowdnes & Skelcher (1998) also dissociate partnerships as an organisational form from networks as a particular mode of governance. Moreover, Skelcher (2000) draws a distinction between the loose steering by government of policy networks and government's more active direction of partnerships.

The steering of partnerships by government leads some authors to view partnerships as a mechanism for new forms of hierarchical control (Entwhistle et al., 2007). When considered alongside the concept of governmentality, hierarchical and external steering of partnerships may be seen as a way of institutionalising a particular form of conduct desired by government. Whitehead (2007), in particular, suggests that 'traditional' hierarchical, government mechanisms are being used to co-ordinate and govern the operation of partnerships. In his view, partnerships are part of a political system which combines 'hierarchical forms of power and control with non-hierarchical systems of political organisation' (Whitehead, 2007, p4). Given these differing perspectives, Lowndes & Skelcher's (1998, p314) comment that 'partnerships are associated with a variety of forms of social co-ordination – including network, hierarchy and market' is perhaps an appropriate default position.

Whatever the precise relationship between partnerships and other modes of governance, studies of specific partnership arrangements have questioned the extent to which they meet normative standards of governance. In particular, the claim by partnership advocates, including government, that partnerships represent more open forms of governance has been

challenged by a number of authors. For example, Geddes (2006, p92) identifies that Local Strategic Partnerships and New Deal for the Community partnerships are ‘deficient in democratic terms’. Commonly such arguments are based on the suggestion that partnerships may reflect, or even reinforce, existing power relationships (Rummery, 2002). Tett et al. (2003, p50) believe that partnerships ‘mask a new configuration in which popular voices are marginalised’. Attempts to involve voluntary sector members in partnerships have been criticised both for lack of representativeness and influence over partnership agendas (Lewis, 2005). Thus, to return to Geddes’ (2006) view, partnerships may limit policy options to those that are congruent with the objectives of the current government. This perspective has clear resonance with the literature on governmentality described earlier in the chapter.

The other claim made for partnerships is that they may offer a more effective approach to ‘joined-up’ governance or the delivery of particular outcomes. Relating the two main claims, Skelcher et al. (2005, p590) suggest that ‘the actionable forms created in partnership design processes privilege delivery of public policy outcomes over the due process norms of traditional models of governance’. This claim can be linked to the potential for the development of collaborative capacity and the achievement of collaborative advantage, as outlined in Section 3.3.3. However, a number of authors subscribe to Ling’s (2000, p86) view that ‘advocates of such a style of governance [partnerships] have so far failed to provide persuasive evidence that this brand of government is demonstrably more effective’.

Identified barriers to effective delivery of partnership outcomes share much in common with the reasons given for collaborative inertia, the flipside of collaborative advantage, by Huxham & Vangen (2005). Other authors suggest that more fundamental problems affect the effectiveness of partnerships. In particular, the influence of central government is often cited as an impediment to local partnership working. For example, with respect to local regeneration partnerships, Davies (2005, p328) identifies that

small-scale, locally resourced partnerships are less likely to face conflict and more likely to produce valued outcomes than those constructed from a sense of political obligation to government or the need for government funds.

Similarly, Sullivan et al. (2006) suggest that central government's 'principal-agent' relationship with Heath Action Zone partnerships impeded the development of local collaborative capacity. In more general terms, the identification of such issues 'raises the question of whether mandatory partnerships or enforced co-operation is the environment in which partnerships are most likely to do well' (Powell & Dowling, 2006, p311).

3.4.3 Partnership and collaboration in education and sport

The final part of this section reviews academic studies of partnership and collaboration that are directly relevant to the focus of this study on education and PE, school and community sport. Empirical studies on partnership and collaboration in education can be divided into those that examine the local governance of education and those that consider school-based inter-agency collaboration. Each of these aspects of the literature will be considered in turn followed by a review of research on collaboration and partnership in PE, school and community sport.

Local Governance in Education

Recent studies on the local governance of education have considered the implications of specific programmes, in particular the development of Education Action Zones (EAZs). Although EAZs may not directly influence the cases examined in this study, they are of interest for two reasons. Firstly, when they were initiated in 1998, EAZs were expected by the Blair government to be the precursor of more general developments in the education system (Hallgarten & Wading, 2001). Secondly, EAZs resemble other central government programmes in which partnership is promoted

through competitive bidding processes (Halpin et al. 2004), much like the New Opportunities for PE and Sport programme.

Despite the government rhetoric of EAZs heralding new modes of education governance, separate studies by Hallgarten & Wading (2001) and Jones & Bird (2000) suggest that continuities with existing forms of governance were more dominant in practice. In the EAZs that they studied, Jones & Bird (2000) identify the membership of governing partnerships as narrow and focused on those agencies locally involved with education that had pre-existing relationships. Despite government advocacy for business involvement in EAZs, businesses commonly had a low level of practical involvement and provided little financial investment into local education authorities (LEAs) (Hallgarten & Wading, 2001). Furthermore, both Hallgarten & Wading (2001) and Jones & Bird (2000) identify that LEAs had a major, and most commonly a lead, role in EAZ partnerships. Explaining the dominance of LEAs in EAZ partnerships, Jones & Bird (2000, p504) comment that there was an 'inability of new partners to match the capacities even of less commanding LEAs'.

It is also interesting to note the findings of Hallgarten & Wading (2001) and Jones & Bird (2000) on the impact of central government in local governance within EAZs. At the outset of the EAZ programme, the short application timescales were credited with constraining potential for changes to existing local governance arrangements (Hallgarten & Wading, 2001). Subsequently, central government's setting of detailed targets for EAZs was recognised as affecting local governance. For Jones & Bird (2000), target setting represents an increased level of central government intervention to steer the local governance towards national agendas. Somewhat similarly, Hallgarten & Wading (2001) suggest that national targets stifled the development of local innovations.

School-based collaboration

The observation, made in 2001 by Tett et al., that there was a lack of research on collaboration between schools and external agencies still holds true to a large extent. Besides Tett and colleagues, few academics have studied school-based collaboration, particularly with organisations beyond the school, and studies have typically been conducted on a small scale. This subsection will examine the themes identified within and across these studies while still recognising that on a larger scale, it is 'highly likely that different models of collaborative partnership will exist side by side in the same locale and even in the same school' (Tett et al., 2001, p19).

Where undertaken, collaborative working is commonly a new venture for schools (Milbourne et al., 2003). Authors have suggested that one factor that has constrained schools entering collaboration is the fragmented nature of the education system in England with schools becoming increasingly autonomous (Webb & Vulliamy, 2001). The Blair government attempted to promote collaborative working in schools, through for example EAZs, but, as identified more generally, the degree of central coercion proved problematic (Tett et al., 2003). For example, Halpin et al. (2004) report that potential collaborators were alienated when narrow educational objectives were stressed by the government.

Unsurprisingly, the specific objectives of any potential collaboration were also important to schools' involvement. Effective collaboration was identified where external agencies were believed to have the capacity to add value to the work of schools (Tett et al., 2003) particularly in areas where schools had less expertise (Tett, 2005). Connected to this, Ball (1998 cited in Tett et al., 2003) suggests that schools may be more disposed to collaboration in 'peripheral' areas (sport being an example) rather than 'core' academic subjects. Similarly, in studying Integrated Community Schools in Scotland, Tett et al. (2005, p160) describe some school staff 'who felt that their subject specialisms were sometimes affected detrimentally by having to collaborate with other agencies'.

Reflecting the professional background of school staff, a number of authors identify that different norms and values have impeded collaborative working between schools and external agencies. For example, in their study of collaboration in home-school support projects, Webb & Vulliamy (2001) find that there were tensions in relationships between school and social work orientated staff. Conversely, they identify better relationships between schools and, what they term as, 'school-focused agencies' that had a better understanding of the norms and practices of school staff. Similarly, and more generally, Tett et al. (2003, p47) comment that 'tensions arise both from the different priorities that agencies [including schools] establish and the different definitions of pedagogic purpose and practice that govern their work'.

Despite these difficulties, authors do present evidence of effective school-based collaboration and the factors that underpin it. Tett et al.'s (2001) identification of requirements of effective school-based collaboration shares much in common with the facets of collaborative capacity and advantage described in Section 3.3.3. In particular, these authors highlight the importance of human and financial resources being available to organisations undertaking collaboration. Similarly, the attitudes, aptitudes and capacity of particular individuals have been shown to be important to collaboration. In different studies, Tett (2005) highlights the importance of head teachers taking a long-term view of the benefits of collaboration while Webb & Vulliamy (2001) draw attention to the positive role of school-based individuals employed specifically to develop collaboration across different agencies. Alternatively, in their study of EAZs, Halpin et al. (2004) find that Zone directors lacked the time and capacity to promote inter-agency collaboration.

PE, School and Community Sport

Despite partnership having 'emerged to become the key mechanism of service delivery' in sport (McDonald, 2005, p593), there has been little published research on partnership or collaboration in PE, school and community sport. As a result, only three published papers have sufficient utility to be considered for this study and, in these three, partnership and collaboration in sport is integrated into papers that consider broader themes.

Houlihan (2000) presents data from four case studies of schools that were among the first to be designated Specialist Sports Colleges. In general, he found that

> *all four schools were enthusiastic about the benefits of networking and partnership building, with new or strengthened links between the school and clubs, local authority sports development officers and local schools being seen as of especial value*
>
> (Houlihan, 2000, p189)

That is not to say that variations in partnership working did not exist across the four schools or in the relationships with particular types of partners. In particular, Houlihan (2000) reported that developing partnerships with other schools within their 'family' built on existing networks that had previously coalesced around extra-curricular sport.

Flintoff (2003) also examines partnership as part of wider case studies of early work undertaken by School Sport Co-ordinators. Unlike Houlihan (2000), she adopts the common position that the development of partnerships between schools may be hindered by the 'educational climate' which emphasises competition between them. However, the empirical data presented suggests that building links with 'feeder' primary schools was a key role for School Sport Co-ordinators and fitted with the ethos of competition to attract pupils when they stepped up to secondary school (Flintoff, 2003).

As with Houlihan (2000), Flintoff (2003) identifies that there were differences in partnership working between the School Sport Co-ordinators that were studied. These differences were dependent on what the individual co-ordinators understood to be important in their own local environment (Flintoff, 2003). However, a lack of awareness of the community sports development context meant that developing links with wider community networks was problematical for School Sport Co-ordinators. As an educationalist, Flintoff (2003, p247) herself warns that the 'danger in making alliances with groups outside of schools and the educational environment is that the educational agenda may be lost'.

Finally, McDonald (2005) examines County Sports Partnerships in a concluding section to a paper concerned with theorising partnerships in general. McDonald's (2005) analysis differs from the other two papers in examining governance by partnerships rather than the, implicit, focus by Houlihan (2000) and Flintoff (2003) on collaboration as a mechanism to achieve desired outcomes. A further difference is that, rather than being based on empirical data, McDonald's (2005) analysis is based on the policies that led to the formation of County Sports Partnerships. In general, McDonald (2005, p594) asserts that, in the sport policy context, County Sports Partnerships 'occupy a pivotal position, as they are responsible for applying national policy to local conditions'. Linking with the concept of governmentality, McDonald (2005) suggests that County Sports Partnerships may have limited freedom within an agenda that is prescribed by government and other national agencies.

3.6 Conclusions

This chapter has reviewed a wide range of theories and concepts of potential value to the study of partnership and collaboration. The purpose of this concluding section is to consider what these theories and concepts may contribute to, and how they may be used in, this study. The theories, concepts and research described in each of the preceding sections will be

considered separately in this conclusion before some reflections as to how these separate literatures can be collectively utilised will be offered.

Although not specific to the focus of this study, it is suggested that theories of power, modes of governance, 'new' governance arrangements and governmentality have relevance in examining partnership and collaboration and as such, will influence both the collection and analysis of data for this study. For example, the study will examine the ways in which power is exercised within partnerships and analyse to what extent this relates to Lukes' (1974) description of three dimensions of power or represents the more consensual conception of power suggested by Parsons (1963) and Arendt (1970). The exercise of power beyond partnerships and collaborative arrangements will also be examined and the governmentality literature, in particular, may be used to analyse whether and how central agencies attempt to influence local approaches to partnership and collaboration.

Being more directly related to partnership and collaboration than the analytic concepts considered in the previous paragraph, facets of the literature on policy networks, regime theory and collaborative advantage will have particular utility in underpinning data collection and analysis in this study. The typologies of policy networks and regimes provide schema for collecting and classifying data on partnerships and collaborative arrangements and may, therefore, facilitate identification of similarities and differences between the three case studies. As a result, these typologies may be crucial in answering the study's first research question.

Moreover, the concepts will support the development of answers to the second research question. Marsh & Smith's (2000) model provides a context for analysis of how both the structure of partnerships and collaborative arrangements as well as the agencies that comprise them may influence policy processes and outputs. More specifically, the detail provided by regime theory and the literature on collaborative advantage will highlight issues to be empirically examined relating to the capacities and

processes required within partnerships and collaborative arrangements in order to generate desired outputs and outcomes.

Consideration of the existing research literature enables the researcher to become more aware of the context of the study and potential issues that may be identified. The identification of problematic issues relating to definitions of partnership and collaboration both highlights the complexity of issues that will be considered in the research process and also identifies a concern that this study may help to resolve. Similarly, the identification that there has been minimal research on partnership and collaboration in PE, school and community sport emphasises the importance of this study in beginning to address this weakness.

The review of research literature also assists the study in (at least) two further ways. Firstly, the review of studies of partnership and collaboration in educational contexts identifies important features of the context that may similarly affect these types of arrangements in the NOPES programme. Secondly, the literature review demonstrates how authors have linked partnership and collaboration to other concepts considered earlier in this chapter. For example, the literature identifies that the different modes of co-ordination identified in Section 3.2.2 have utility in examining governance within, and by, partnerships. The overall lack of clarity in understanding how partnership relates to different modes of co-ordination also provides an opportunity for this study to contribute positively to existing literature.

Moreover, the study has the potential to make a wider contribution to the development of some of the concepts examined in this chapter. For example, theoretical development of the policy networks concept appears to have stalled since the start of this century. Given the increasing importance of partnerships, and the apparent relevance of the policy networks concept to their study, this lack of progress is somewhat surprising. However, it may be that this study can contribute to the continued development of the concept of policy networks in order to improve its utility in examining partnership and collaboration. It may also be that the study can examine

whether utilising policy networks with the more agency-focused theory of collaborative advantage enhances explanations of the outcomes of partnerships and collaborative arrangements.

This last point links to the final issue to be considered in this concluding section, namely, how the range of different concepts examined in this chapter can collectively contribute to this study. As highlighted throughout the chapter, there are a number of issues that cut across the different theories and concepts examined. For example, issues regarding the possession and exercise of power are relevant to, and in some cases explicitly included in, concepts such as policy networks and regime theory that may have more direct applicability to partnership and collaboration. Other examples, such as the link between concepts of new governance and the European literature on policy networks, have already been made more explicit at particular points in the chapter. That such commonalities and intersections exist does not deny the assertion that different theories and concepts offer alternative perspectives or that, even within a single concept, there may be a number of different positions. Therefore, these alternative perspectives will also help to sensitise the researcher to different and relevant aspects of local partnerships and collaborative arrangements.

As a result, this study will not adopt a single theory or concept as a basis for analysis. Instead, particular theories and concepts will be utilised where they have relevance and can support explanation of empirical evidence. For example, while policy networks may offer a structural analysis of partnership and collaboration, concepts of collaborative capacity and advantage may have greater utility in explaining characteristics and behaviours of individuals within these structures. By adopting such an approach, a fuller and more nuanced analysis of the structures, agencies and processes of governance, partnership and collaboration in PE, school and community sport will be presented. Furthermore, this approach will allow a review of the utility of different theories and concepts to the study of partnership and collaboration in PE, school and community sport to be provided in the final chapter.

Chapter Four: Research Strategy

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explain and justify the research strategy adopted for the study. At the outset, it is important to clarify that the purpose of this research strategy is to attempt to answer the two research questions identified in the first chapter:

> **What forms of local partnership and collaboration are developed for, and connected to, the New Opportunities for PE and Sport programme?**
>
> **How do these partnership and collaborative arrangements influence the local policy process and outputs within the New Opportunities for PE and Sport programme?**

Grix (2002) and Sparkes (1992) clearly suggest the order that components of the research strategy should be considered. The suggested order and the logic that underpins it is explained well by Sparkes (1992, p14)

> *ontological assumptions give rise to epistemological assumptions which have methodological implications for the choices made regarding particular techniques of data collection, the interpretation of these findings and the eventual ways they are written about and presented*

The structure for the chapter, therefore, follows this order. First, the chapter begins with a consideration of a number of ontological and epistemological positions that can be adopted in social science research. This is followed by an elucidation of the ontological and epistemological assumptions that underpin this study. As suggested in the quote above, these assumptions have implications for the study's methodology and consequently the actual

methods employed. Therefore, the final sections of this chapter will examine the general methodology and the particular research methods employed, including consideration of their strengths and weaknesses as well as the potential of these methods to answer the research questions set.

4.2 Ontology and Epistemology

Grix (2002) suggests that much research is weakened by a lack of differentiation between the terms ontology and epistemology. Therefore, before proceeding with this section, definitions of these terms should be provided. Blaikie (1993, p8) gives one of the clearest definitions of ontology as

> *claims and assumptions that are made about the nature of social reality, claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other. In short, ontological assumptions are concerned with what we believe constitutes social reality*

Drawing on these ontological assumptions, epistemological positions follow. These positions consider the knowledge that can be gained on this social reality and the validity of such knowledge (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

The ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning research in the social sciences can be grouped into a number of traditions or paradigms. Each of these paradigms has a level of internal consistency, although as shall be demonstrated they often encompass slightly different strands. As a prelude to consideration of the ontology and epistemology of this study, a brief overview of the positivist, interpretive and critical realism paradigms will be given.

The positivist position, or functionalist as Burrell & Morgan (1979) refer to it, reflects a view of the social world as a ‘real world made up of hard tangible and relatively immutable facts that can be observed, measured and known

for what they are' (Sparkes, 1992, p10). For positivists, the social world is independent of an individual's understanding of it (Sparkes, 1992). This ontology leads to an epistemological position that asserts that only those phenomena which can be observed are genuine and that valid knowledge is free from values attributed to it by individuals (Bryman, 2001). Furthermore, as in the natural sciences, positivists believe that is possible to find generalisable laws or theories that can be used to explain and predict the social world (Blaikie, 1993). Adopting these positivist assumptions necessarily has implications for research methodology which generally seeks, as in the natural sciences, to test the relationships between variables in the social world in order to assert or deduce the validity of particular hypotheses or theories.

Diametrically opposed to positivism is the interpretive paradigm. The ontological standpoint taken by social scientists within this paradigm is one which identifies social reality as the interpretations that individuals have of the social world in which they exist. This is not to say that individuals do not share similar interpretations of the social world. Quoting Blaikie (1993, p96) again, 'social reality is regarded as the product of processes by which social actors together negotiate the meaning for actions and situations'. Furthermore, these meanings and interpretations are not fixed but are constantly being constructed and refined (Bryman, 2001). As with positivism, an interpretive ontology leads to a particular epistemological position. Knowledge is a 'human construction' which is gained from individual interpretations of social reality (Sparkes, 1992; Blaikie, 1993). Research, therefore, does not seek to obtain objective facts and explanation but rather an interpretive understanding (Marsh & Smith, 2001) and research methods themselves may be aligned with particular interpretations (Sparkes, 1992).

The third paradigm to be considered is that of critical realism, possibly the most diffuse of the three paradigms. This diffuseness is shown in the multiplicity of terms used by different authors: while Bhaskar (1989) refers to critical realism as a single paradigm other authors refer primarily to the critical paradigm (Harvey, 1990) or realism (Blaikie, 1993) in isolation.

Furthermore, authors recognise different strands within these paradigms, for example Sparkes (1992) who distinguishes between the critical traditions of radical humanism and radical structuralism. These differences primarily reflect a more objective or subjective approach.

Despite these differences, it is the ontological and epistemological assumptions of critical realism that most closely resemble those that underpin this study. However, the broadness of the critical realism paradigm means that the key ontological and epistemological assumptions from this paradigm that underpin this study must be made clear. The ontological position of this study differs fundamentally from the positivist and interpretive paradigms in asserting that social reality is a construction of both observable and unobservable features. Observable features may be the actions of individuals and organisations (agencies) while, features that may be unobservable directly are 'deep' structures such as social class, ethnicity and gender. As shall be explained, this is not to say that the study accepts the converse, that all structures are unobservable. The knowledge that can be acquired on these observable and unobservable features is an epistemological issue which will be addressed in the final paragraph of this section. However, from these brief assumptions, it is obvious that there is a complex relationship between structure and agency. It is therefore necessary to elucidate the study's ontological position on the relationship between structure and agency.

Especially from the 1970s onwards, there has been considerable debate on the relationship between structure and agency (Hay, 2002). In general terms, it is now the case that many authors accept that

> *agents are situated within a structured context which presents an uneven distribution of opportunities and constraints on them. Actors influence the development of that context over time through the consequences of their actions.*
>
> (Hay, 2002, pp166-7)

However, although this point may be commonly accepted, beyond it there remain differing, though broadly similar, positions on the ontological relationship between structure and agency. Hay (2002) describes three of these positions, the structuration theory of Anthony Giddens, the morphogenetic approach developed by Margaret Archer (1989, 1995, 1998) from her understanding of critical realism and the strategic-relational approach promoted by Hay himself. In the main, the ontological position taken in this study will be similar to that of the strategic-relational approach although to understand the nuances of this position the differences between structuration theory, the morphogenetic approach and the strategic-relational approach need to be made clear.

Structuration theory is founded on the ontological assumption of the duality of structure and agency. The analogy made by Giddens is that structure and agency are two sides of the same coin (Hay, 2002). Thus, 'social structures are both constituted by human agency, and yet at the same time are the very medium of its constitution' (Giddens, 1976, p211). Despite the attractiveness of this position, Hay (2002) criticises structuration theory for maintaining an 'analytical dualism' in which structure or agency can only be identified in isolation from each other. Conversely, in the morphogenetic approach, structure and agency are considered as both ontologically and analytically separate with actors inheriting 'pre-constituted' social structures (Lewis, 2002). It should be noted that, while based within a critical realist tradition, the morphogenetic approach is developed from Archer's reading of the works of Roy Bhaskar which, Hay (2002) suggests, may support different understandings of the relationship between structure and agency.

The diversity of understandings of critical realism is why the adoption of the strategic-relational approach is not in conflict with the broadly critical realist position taken in this study. In fact, Hay (2002, p127) states that the strategic-relational approach 'draws upon the critical realism of Bhaskar'. The ontological position that underpins the strategic-relational approach is that structure and agency are 'interwoven' and 'mutually constitutive' with any identified distinction between them being merely an analytical one (Hay,

2002). The integration between structure and agency in the strategic-relational approach is strengthened by Jessop's (1996) refinement of the dualism between structure and agency into a duality between a strategic actor who exists in a strategically selective context. This is an ontological position adopted by Marsh & Smith (2000) in their dialectical model of policy networks.

Despite these ontological differences, the broad parameters of the respective influence that agents and structures have remain similar in structuration theory, the morphogenetic and strategic-relational approaches. Within the critical realist tradition, Lewis (2002) suggests that agents are the 'efficient' cause of outcomes, in that their actions initiate the outcomes that result. Hay's conception of the strategic-relational approach is little different, as demonstrated in the suggestion that 'outcomes are contingent upon [the] strategic choices' of actors (Hay, 2002, p129). It is, however, in the influence of structures that the theorists differ in their positions. While the morphogenetic approach is based on the temporality of structure and agency, the strategic-relational approach rejects this artificial distinction and suggests that structures, whether 'deep' or otherwise, are 'strategically selective' in favouring particular outcomes in a given situation. Furthermore, Hay (2002) again emphasises the interrelated nature of structure and agency by highlighting the impact of a strategic actor's perceptions of the strategically selective context on the strategic calculations that subsequently underpins his/her actions. This differentiation between the process of formulating action and the resultant action itself will be important throughout this study.

A final point regarding the relationship between structure, agency and actions is also required. It is accepted in this study, as well as by theorists, that actions and their outcomes may alter structures (Lewis, 2002). What the strategic-relational approach also offers is an understanding that outcomes may directly affect actors themselves in providing learning about the efficacy of particular strategic actions (Hay, 2002). Again, a similar point is made in Marsh & Smith's (2000) dialectical model of policy networks. It is assumed in

this study that outcomes may have a causal influence on both structures and agents.

From the ontological assumptions outlined in the previous paragraphs, the epistemological position of the study follows. Again, this position is situated in the middle ground between the positivist and interpretive epistemological positions briefly described earlier. As has been intimated, this study shares with critical realism the understanding that there may be differences between appearance and reality (Hay, 2002). While the actions of agents and some structures may be observable, other 'deep' structures may not be directly observable. Research in the critical realist tradition, therefore, uses theory to help identify and explain the influence of these unobservable structures (Marsh & Smith, 2001; Bryman, 2001; Harvey, 1990). In this study, a number of the theoretical concepts identified in the previous chapter will be used in this role. So, for example, regime theory may help explain the underlying structures which exclude organisations from collaborations connected to the NOPES programme and thus how this exclusion may affect the resulting policy outputs. Conversely, as Hay (2002) suggests in describing the strategic-relational approach, using theory to analyse policy outputs may allow identification of the unobservable structures which may fully or partially determine these outputs.

4.3 Methodological Issues

In order to attempt to answer the two research questions stated at the start of the chapter, within the ontological and epistemological framework outlined, various methodological issues have to be addressed. Again methodological issues logically follow from one another. First, this section addresses the type of data best suited to the study. Subsequently the remainder of the section comprises of a discussion of the methodological issues resulting from this choice.

The research questions for the study emphasise the need to understand partnership and collaboration in the context of the New Opportunities for PE

and Sport (NOPES) programme and their influence on policy outputs at a local level. Given the ontological and epistemological assumptions described above, this will entail gaining individuals' perceptions of partnerships and the wider collaborative context as well as uncovering the structural features that may be unobservable to these participants. Qualitative research is particularly adept at gaining these types of insights. As Denzin & Lincoln (1994, p5) state qualitative research 'captures the individual's point of view' as well as 'the constraints of everyday life'. Similarly Bryman (2004, p281) suggests that the strength of this type of research is that it 'emphasises the importance of contextual understanding of social behaviour'. Utilising qualitative data will also be useful in understanding how partnerships and collaborative arrangements influence NOPES policy outputs. Quoting Denzin & Lincoln (1994, p2) again, qualitative research will allow the study to 'acquire an in-depth understanding of the phenomena in question'. In conclusion, it is argued that the collection of qualitative data will provide the study with the in-depth information required to describe and explain partnership and collaborative arrangements.

Having chosen a research approach based on the use of qualitative data, it follows that the methodological issues arising from this choice must be understood. These methodological issues mainly pertain to questions of quality in conducting the research and presenting the findings. Bryman (2004) questions the applicability to qualitative research of traditionally quantitative terms of reliability and validity. However, Silverman (2000, p188) in writing for qualitative researchers, urges them to 'ensure that your methods were reliable and your conclusions valid'. The distinction between assuring quality of research methods (connected to reliability) and quality of analysis (connected to validity) is one that is implicit in a number of qualitative research texts (e.g. Patton, 2002) and, therefore, will be adopted here.

Use of various triangulation techniques is often suggested to enhance the reliability of research methods (Janesick, 1995). Three methods of

triangulation will be used in the design of research methods for this study. Firstly, triangulation of investigators will naturally occur. The nature of the study, being conducted concurrently with the evaluation of the NOPES programme by the Loughborough Partnership, will mean that there will be instances when two researchers will together collect data to be used in this study. It is important to note, however, that other researchers will not be involved in the interpretation of data for this study. Also data will be triangulated from different sources in each case study with the perspectives of a number of individuals involved in PE, school and community sport being sought. Finally, as shall be described in the following sections, methods themselves will be triangulated as interview data will be combined with data collected from relevant documents. The rigorous application of these methods is also important in ensuring quality research (Patton, 2002). The understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of this study's particular research methods (in the following sections) will support their rigorous implementation.

The questions of what values the researcher brings to the study and how the researcher may affect data collection are particularly relevant to qualitative research (Patton, 2002). As qualitative research is not value-free (Janesick, 1995), researchers should be explicit about the values and biases that underpin their study. In the case of this study, alongside the ontological and epistemological assumptions described in this chapter, the values underlying the theoretical concepts to be utilised in this study have been discussed in Chapter Three.

The nature of the study itself also has implications for the relationship between the researcher and individuals and organisations that are subjects in the research. As mentioned previously, the study will be conducted alongside the evaluation of the entire NOPES programme. Much of the data used in this study will be taken from that collected primarily for the concurrent evaluation, the results of which will be made publicly available. This feature undoubtedly has the potential to affect the relationship between

researcher and researched and any noticed effects will be observed and recorded.

If the conclusions of the study are to be considered valid, then the techniques used in analysis of data are important. Again triangulation, this time of the theories used to support the analysis of data, will be employed. Patton (2002) advises that a number of theories be employed to analyse the data to ascertain if similar conclusions are reached. This is a strength of the broad-based theoretical approach of this study described in Chapter Three. In addition to triangulation of theory in analysis, Silverman (2000) describes a number of techniques for analysis of quantitative data which enhance the credibility of the interpretations and conclusions drawn. Briefly summarising, these include building on initial analyses by comparing subsequent data, ensuring all data is included in the analysis, searching for data that refutes initial conclusions and subsequently addressing these deviant cases in refining conclusions (Silverman, 2000). All these techniques of analysis will be utilised in this study.

4.4 Research Methods

Following from the general methodological considerations, this section examines the specific research methods to be used in this study. As previously mentioned, data will be collected through interviews and documentary evidence. However, these data collection techniques will be conducted within a more general case study framework. The following sections will address each of these methods, case studies, interviews and documentary analysis, in turn to identify why and precisely how the method will be utilised. Furthermore each section will address the general methodological issues already identified and those that are particular to the method itself.

4.4.1 Case Studies

The research questions posed at the start of this chapter require answers that are both descriptive, of forms of partnership and collaboration, and explanatory, of how these forms influence policy processes and outputs. Case studies are suitable for providing both these types of answers (Yin, 2003). More specifically, case studies are used to study complex relationships between behaviours and their contexts (Stake, 1994) particularly where the boundaries between the context and behaviour are blurred (Yin, 2003). These facets may be especially important in this study which seeks to examine actions within partnerships connected to the NOPES programme. Therefore, case studies are a particularly appropriate method for the study.

Given the adoption of a case study method there are a number of research choices and issues to address. The first of these issues is the selection of cases for the study. Yin (2003) is firmly in favour of conducting multiple-case studies, if possible, as he believes that this will result in more compelling findings. In this study it is considered that examining three cases, each being based upon a specific local authority area, will provide a balance of allowing some cross-case analysis while containing the scope and size of the study. Multiple-case study design can be based upon either literal replication, where similar findings are predicted, or theoretical replication, where reasons for different findings are explained by theory (Yin, 2003). Given that, at the time of case study selection, it was impossible to speculate on what type of partnership or collaboration may exist, theoretical replication was adopted to underpin the multiple-case design. Examining partnership and collaboration utilising different theoretical concepts will allow for improved analysis of differences between cases.

Selection of particular cases depends on the type of case study to be conducted. Different authors (e.g. Yin, 2003; Stake, 1994) provide different categorisations of case study types. However, the type adopted in this study is closest to Bryman's (2004) 'exemplifying case' in which the case chosen

provides a context for the specific research questions to be answered. Such cases are chosen not for their rarity or uniqueness, rather for their ability to offer insight into a particular issue. Precisely what each case exemplifies may only become apparent after the study has begun (Bryman, 2004). This is particularly true in this study where a choice of cases was made knowing little about the nature of partnership and collaborative arrangements in place.

Beyond being a context for answering the research questions, Stake (1994) advises that the selection of cases should be made to provide balance and variety rather than any particular representativeness. Addressing these issues for this study, it should be recognised that a major limitation was the constraint of case study choice to those that were being studied as part of the wider NOPES evaluation. However, the three cases finally chosen offered variety in geographical location, different NOPES allocations of funding and, importantly diverse political and governmental contexts. In particular, each case is unique in the way local education authority (LEA) functions were organised. Midcity had the traditional model of local government control of all LEA functions. However, the other two case studies differed in that the functions of the LEA were outsourced to different organisations: in Lonborough a private company and in Northtown an arm's-length charitable trust. The study will, therefore, be able to investigate whether these differences had any effect on forms of partnership and collaboration as well as policy processes.

Yin (2003) also identifies that within any one case, there may be further, smaller, 'embedded' units of analysis. Such embedded units have the potential to 'enhance insights' into the whole case (Yin, 2003). In the case of this study, individual NOPES projects represent embedded units within each of the three cases. There is little in the literature on the selection of embedded units and, in this study, the selection of NOPES projects to be examined will be dependent on practical issues of access and the timescales of construction of facilities. What Yin (2003) does emphasise is that analysis of embedded units should be integrated into each case

separately before they contribute to cross-case analysis. This approach will be adopted within this study.

Although case studies are not a data collection method in themselves, their adoption has implications for the data collection methods selected. Both Yin (2003) and Stake (1994) advise that multiple sources of evidence should be utilised. This point mirrors the earlier discussion of the need for different forms of triangulation. Furthermore, Yin (2003) also suggests the need for theoretical propositions to guide both data collection and analysis. Again, this fits with the theoretical approach identified in the previous chapter.

Beyond analysis of embedded units, there are other specific issues concerning data analysis within case studies. Similar to the point made more generally about qualitative research, analysis of data in case studies is important in assuring the validity of findings (Yin, 2003). Yin (2003) offers a variety of data analysis techniques or strategies that could be employed in case studies, for example pattern matching, time-series analysis and logic models. However, it is the technique of explanation building that is most appropriate for this study and its multiple-case design. Yin's (2003) description of explanation building involves a number of iterative steps which will be adapted for the particular nature of this study and especially the extended period of data collection. One benefit of adopting this iterative approach to data analysis is that it supports cross-case synthesis.
The iterative steps for this study will be:

(i) conduct initial analysis of early data from a single case using the different theoretical concepts adopted in the study
(ii) use this analysis to provide insight into the concepts' use in the analysis of early data in the other cases
(iii) revise initial understandings of the use of theoretical concepts
(iv) conduct analysis of all data from a single case utilising these revised understandings
(v) conduct this revised analysis in the remaining two cases
(vi) a final reconsideration of all the data in light of the analysis from all three cases.

A degree of cross-case analysis is implicit in a number of the steps in this iterative process. However, given the importance of comparison across the three cases to the overall findings of the study, it is worthwhile to make explicit the key features of this process, in particular those that will be undertaken in the last step of the iterative process. Higgins (1981) emphases the importance of utilising theory in comparison processes and, in the international context, Houlihan (1987) recognises the increasing use of meso-level concepts in doing so. Thus, in this study, the process of cross-case analysis will be closely tied to the theoretical concepts considered in Chapter Three. The range of theoretical concepts underpinning the study will enable Eisenhart's (1989) proposition, that a variety of perspectives should be adopted in comparing data across cases, to be adopted. Cross-case analysis regarding the first research question offers a case in point. Both policy networks and regime theory offer different categorisations by which the forms of partnership and collaboration in the three case studies can be compared. Moreover, this approach to cross-case analysis fulfils Eisenhart's (1989) complementary suggestion that categorisation may aid the identification of similarities and differences between cases.

Connected to the analysis of data is one final issue with regard to case studies that requires consideration: the extent to which findings can be generalised. Both Stake (1994) and Bryman (2004) comment on the regularity with which case studies are criticised for their lack of generalisability. Given the choice of cases is not designed to be representative, there is little scope for generalising from these cases to all local authorities involved in the NOPES programme. However, it is possible in case studies to generalise to the theoretical concepts underpinning the study and thus build their power for further use (Stake, 1994). This issue will be addressed in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

4.4.2 Interviews

As noted when methodological issues were considered, an aim for the study is to understand individuals' perceptions of their context, as well as their understandings of the policy process undertaken in this context. Interviews are an excellent tool for gaining data to address these issues. As May (1993, p109) explains, interviews provide 'means of analysing the ways in which people consider events and relationships and the reasons they offer for doing so.' A similar point is made by Bryman (2004, p321) who suggests that interviews can help understand 'what the interviewee views as important in explaining and understanding events, patterns and forms of behaviour'. As such interviews will be one of the main research methods for this study. The use of interviews also fits well with the case study design (Yin, 2003) and will enable the collection of the rich and detailed data that case studies require (Fielding & Thomas, 2001).

Interviews can be categorised in various ways. Commonly, interview styles are described as ranging from structured to unstructured. An alternative distinction is between individual and group interviews. This study will primarily utilise semi-structured interviews which, due to access constraints, will be conducted both individually and in groups. On one level the use of both group and individual interviews is a limitation of the study as comparability will be lessened as 'group and individual interviews may produce *different* perspectives on the *same* issues' (May, 1993, p94, *italics as in original*). However, this could also been construed as a strength, utilising the different facets of interviewing in both settings. The following paragraphs will consider in more depth the issues connected with semi-structured interviewing, firstly in general, and secondly in the more specific group setting.

Semi-structured interviewing involves following a set topic guide for the interview but allowing the interviewer freedom to prompt and ask further questions as necessary to elicit additional information. Utilising semi-structured interviews allows more freedom for the data collection process to

be adapted to the individual respondent (Fielding & Thomas, 2001; Patton, 2002). This will be particularly useful in the research on the NOPES programme as respondents are likely to have very different roles within and beyond the programme and thus their knowledge on aspects of the programme will differ. Given the focus of the study on structural context as well as agency, it is beneficial for this study that a strength of semi-structured interviews is their utility in eliciting information on context as well as processes (May, 1993).

Group interviews can be conducted in the same way as semi-structured interviews. However, they have their own strengths and weaknesses beyond those of interviews conducted with individuals. In general, group interviews gain more in-depth data (Patton, 2002) which will help provide the 'thick' description required in a case study. Additionally, both May (1993) and Fielding & Thomas (2001) suggest group interviewing allows for greater understanding of interactional processes, group norms and dynamics. This is especially important in the context of this study where one research question focuses on how collaborative interaction affects the policy process. However, undertaking semi-structured interviews in groups also leads to less time for individuals to respond with their views and greater difficulty analysing subtle differences in individuals' views (Patton, 2002).

The design of specific questions to be asked in both individual and group interviews will pay due reference to important aspects identified by authors who have considered the interview method in detail. As suggested by Pawson (2003), interview questions will be closely linked both to the main research questions and other key issues identified in previous chapters. In addition, the theoretical concepts identified in Chapter Three as well as the understanding of the wider policy context as described in Chapter Two will inform the content of interview questions (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). For example, the characteristics of policy networks identified in Marsh & Rhodes' (1992) typology will be used to shape questions relating to the form of partnerships in the NOPES programme. The precise questions asked will also be dependent on the position of the particular interviewee(s) within

each case study (Flick, 2006) as well as being informed by previous findings in the case as per the iterative process of analysis identified the previous section. In addition it is important to recognise the implication of the dual purpose of some interviews in providing data both for this study and the NOPES evaluation. In these interviews, questions will be included specifically for the needs of the NOPES evaluation. However, it should be recognised that, in some cases, the data gained from these questions may be used for this study. Conversely, questions that will be primarily designed with this study in mind will also enable collection of data subsequently used in the NOPES evaluation. The annotated exemplar interview schedule provided in Appendix B broadly shows how the relationship between the two research projects influenced the questions to be asked in interviews.

Selecting those to be interviewed is also very important in being able to collect the required data and justify the findings of the study (Devine, 1995). The study will employ a mixture of purposive and snowball sampling of interviewees. Purposive sampling involves selecting interviewees who can provide data that corresponds to the research questions (Bryman, 2004). In this study, analysis of NOPES application documents will allow members of NOPES partnerships to be identified as interviewees. Purposive selection of interviewees will be combined with a version of snowball sampling whereby other individuals will be identified as part of interviews with the original sample of interviewees. This method has the benefit of 'tap[ping] into a network of people' (Devine, 1995), particularly useful in a study of partnership and collaboration. However, care has to be taken not to exclude the views of others who may not be in these networks (May, 1993), particularly as active exclusion of individuals is often a particular feature of policy communities and regimes (Marsh & Rhodes, 1992).

Analysis of interview data involves developing a 'practical system that enables rigorous comparison to be made between interviews while retaining the context of data within each interview' (Fielding & Thomas, 2001, p137). The 'practical system' for coding interview transcripts can be, in the first instance, developed from theoretical concepts (May, 1993). Therefore, for

example, analysis utilising a policy networks framework could involve categorising interview data on collaboration by the dimensions identified by Marsh & Rhodes (1992): membership, integration, power and resources (see Chapter Three for a fuller description of these dimensions of policy networks). This is not to say that themes and concepts from interview data need only be identified *a priori.* Finding new themes in interview data may mean that other interview transcripts should be recoded (Fielding & Thomas, 2001). In order to develop the credibility of the interpretation of interview data, Devine (1995) suggests that these interpretations should be discussed with another researcher as well as the interviewee themselves. Both these techniques are supported in the research as part of the wider evaluation of the NOPES programme.

Although the preceding discussion has encompassed many aspects concerned with the operation of interviews, it is important to consider critiques of, and other issues with, the interview method in order to be explicit about any potential weaknesses of the study. Similar to the general comments about qualitative methods made earlier, the interviewer is likely to have an effect on the data that is collected. For example, in semi-structured interviews it is important to build trust with the interviewee (Devine, 1995), however May (1993) identifies the tension between trust-building and reliability of method. Similarly, interviewees may provide answers that are presumed to be desirable (Fielding & Thomas, 2001; Devine, 1995). This may particularly be the case when, as in this study, interviews are part of a wider programme evaluation. Other potential reasons for unreliability of interview data are incorrect recall and attempts to rationalise actions (Fielding & Thomas, 2001; Devine, 1995). These issues lead May (1993) to suggest that a link between a person's account of action and the action itself cannot be assumed. Therefore, triangulation of data with other sources, such as documents, will be important for the study.

4.4.3 Documentary Analysis

McDonald (2001, p194) describes documentary analysis as an ‘invaluable part of most schemes of triangulation’. However, the use of documentary analysis can go much further than this. As well as providing descriptive, factual information, documents can also ‘elucidate the social processes through which they were formed’ (Scott, 1990, p37). May (1993, p139) makes a similar point describing documents as ‘mediums through which social power is expressed’. Therefore, documents provide the study with, not only a tool for triangulation of interview data, but also a potential insight into deeper structures and processes that interviewees may not perceive or comment upon.

Before continuing to discuss issues to be addressed when conducting documentary analysis, there needs to be clarity about the type of documents that the study will consider. As Scott (1990) states, the availability of documents is a prime consideration. NOPES application documents to the Big Lottery Fund are available to the researcher and will be used at a basic level, as described above, to determine initial interviewees and also for more in-depth analysis of partnership, collaboration, policy process and outputs. Other documents that may be available are policy documents either written specifically for the NOPES programme or encompassing PE, school and community sport agendas. Relevant documents in each case study will be identified through interviews and from analysis of NOPES application documents.

Scott (1990) identifies four issues that need to be addressed in the use of documentary analysis: (i) authenticity, (ii) credibility, (iii) representativeness and (iv) meaning. Although some of these issues may be more relevant than others when considering the types of documents to be used in this study, a consideration of each of them will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the study’s approach to documentary analysis.

Authenticity is the easiest of these issues to address. In using documents, researchers should be clear that the document is as originally produced and the author is who it is said to be (Scott, 1990). This is unlikely to be a problem for the official and relatively recent documents that will be considered in this study. Credibility considers the sincerity of authors in writing the document and the interests they were serving in writing it (Scott, 1990). Credibility will have to be considered in more depth for the documents used. For example, NOPES application documents are written for the purpose of eliciting funding and, therefore, it could be suggested that they are written to provide information that the Big Lottery Fund will assess positively. The accessibility of documents will also have to be considered when addressing representativeness (Scott, 1990). For example, while it may be possible to access minutes of case study NOPES meetings, consideration will have to be given as to whether a complete set can be obtained or how to sample amongst minutes if they are to be used in the study.

Analysing and interpreting the meaning of the documents is by far the most complex issue to be addressed. Scott (1990) believes documents can have three meanings: (i) the meaning the author gives to the document, (ii) the meaning attached to it by the audience and also (iii) an ‘internal meaning’. Attempting to investigate the unstated values, ideas and theories that underpin the socially produced nature of documents (MacDonald, 2001) is to begin to address ‘internal meaning’. Analysis of documents will therefore be a process in which the ‘researcher relates the literal meaning of the document to the contexts in which they were produced in order to understand the meaning of the text as a whole’ (Scott, 1990, p30). This analysis will, therefore, be based not only on the theoretical basis of the study, as May (1993) suggests, but also the interview data to give context to this analysis.

4.5 Research Protocol

As Yin (2003) states, it is important that the study has a clear research protocol which provides a schedule for the implementation of the research methods. The methods described in the previous section will be implemented in the following stages:

Stage 1 Initial selection of cases to be studied will be the first stage of the research. As stated earlier, the selection of cases will be made from a sample chosen as case studies for the national evaluation of the NOPES programme. These cases were chosen to have a geographical spread across the UK (including urban and rural locations), encompassing areas of deprivation and high ethnicity as well as different sizes of NOPES allocation and types of NOPES project. The three cases to be subsequently chosen for this study will be, firstly, all located in England so as to give a common policy context. Another important factor in the selection, as stated previously, will be the differing contexts offered by the three LEAs. All LEAs will be asked for their consent to be part of this study as well as the national NOPES evaluation.

Stage 2 Desk studies of application documents submitted to the Big Lottery Fund are to be undertaken. These will help identify key stakeholders, and interviewees, in each case. Furthermore the study of the application documents will also provide information of the policy context for the case, for example how and to what extent different sport, education and community development programmes coalesce around the NOPES programme in the case study areas.

At this stage an interview with Big Lottery Fund personnel responsible for developing the NOPES programme will be undertaken. Data from this interview will be combined with those from similar interviewees with officials from the Department for Education and Skills and the Department for Culture Media and Sport who have responsibility for school and community sport. These three interviews will seek information and context regarding the aspirations for partnership and collaboration in the NOPES programme.

Stage 3 Initial interviews with key stakeholders identified in each case study will be undertaken. Depending on access considerations these interviews may take place in an individual or group setting. Interviews will cover the NOPES partnerships and wider collaborative context in the case study area as well as the development of policies for the NOPES programme at this local level. Detailed notes will be taken from recordings of all interviews and full transcriptions will be made where it is considered necessary. Initial analysis of the interview data will be undertaken immediately to identify key emergent themes.

Stage 4 Further interviews will be conducted with other individuals in each case who have been identified through the interviews in Stage 3. Interviews with stakeholders in specific NOPES projects, as embedded units in each case, will also be undertaken at this stage. Again the data from all of these interviews will immediately be subject to a first-phase analysis. Documents such as policy statements relevant to PE, school and community sport will also be sought and integrated into analysis at this stage.

Stage 5 Repeat interviews with a selection of interviewees may be considered. These interviews will cover subsequent policy development and implementation as well as continued partnership and collaborative working within the NOPES programme and its wider context. Interviews will be completed by early 2007.

Stage 6 A final round of analysis will be undertaken with all data that has been collected throughout the study. The analysis at this stage will utilise the theoretical concepts identified for the study as well as building on the key themes previously identified. Furthermore at this stage, recordings of key interviews will be listened to for a second time to ensure that no relevant issues were missed in the original analysis.

4.6 Conclusions

The chapter has followed the logical order suggested by Sparkes (1992) and Grix (2002) for consideration of research strategy. In this logical order, ontological assumptions provide the context for the epistemological assumptions made. Subsequently, these assumptions influence the study's methodology, the choice and implementation of research methods and the analysis of the data collected. In summarising the chapter, it is important

that each of these aspects of research strategy and the links between them are addressed.

The key elements of the ontological and epistemological position adopted for this study share much in common with critical realism. The ontological position holds that social reality is a construction of both observable and unobservable features. ‘Deep’ unobservable structures, together with those that are observable, may affect collective, as well as individual and organisational, action within this context. The chapter has considered in some detail the assumptions made about this relationship between structure and agency. The epistemological position concerns what there is to know about this social reality. It asserts that the use of theory is key to understanding the full complexities of social reality including unobservable structures. That is not to say the study rejects the more interpretative position that individual’s perceptions of social reality are also important.

The need to gain an in-depth understanding of context and process, as suggested by the research questions and the ontological and epistemological assumptions, means that qualitative methods are to be employed. This choice raises particular methodological issues of reliability of methods and validity of findings. The chapter describes the techniques, such as triangulation that are to be used to address these concerns. Within the qualitative approach, a case study method is to be adopted. Case studies are ideal for studying both context and phenomena, both of which are issues identified in the research questions. Three local authority cases are to be chosen to provide a balance and variety of contexts in which to study partnership and collaboration. As suggested in case studies, a multi-method approach utilising both semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis will be used. The chapter describes the strengths of this approach as well as issues to be addressed in using these methods in this particular study. A research protocol for the use of these methods as well as the data analysis is also presented. This data analysis will take an iterative approach which also, at its core, utilises the theoretical concepts discussed in the previous chapter.

As outlined in brief in this last section, the chapter describes not only a strategy for conducting the research but also the framework for all aspects of the study. As such the issues raised in this chapter will permeate throughout the discussion of government policy, Lottery policy and empirical case study findings in the following chapters.

Chapter Five: National Perspectives on the New Opportunities for PE and Sport Programme

5.1 Introduction

This chapter begins the presentation of empirical data collected as part of the study. Unlike the local focus of the case study chapters that follow, this chapter examines national perspectives on the NOPES programme. In doing so, data from interviews with representatives of the Fund, the Department for Education & Skills and the Department for Culture, Media & Sport will be used, alongside information from relevant documents. In particular, national perspectives on three aspects of the NOPES programme will be considered. Firstly, the way in which NOPES was expected to fit into the local collaborative context of PE, school and community sport will be covered. The second section of the chapter will examine the aspirations of national stakeholders for local partnerships in the NOPES programme, especially focusing on the role, membership and form of these partnerships. Thirdly, the national governance of the NOPES programme will be considered. Subsequently, the final section of the chapter will utilise some of the theoretical concepts identified in Chapter Three to provide further insight into these national perspectives.

5.2 Collaborative Context of the NOPES programme

At a local level, the main context for this study, the guidance notes for the programme produced by the Fund stated that the NOPES programme should 'integrate and support local strategies to improve PE and school sport' (NOF, 2001, p2). Interestingly, interviewees from the Fund, DCMS and DfES mainly highlighted the potential for integration between NOPES and the local implementation of national programmes and policies rather than those instigated locally. Interviewees from both government departments emphasised the continuity in the policy 'message' regarding school and community usage of facilities across the NOPES programme,

the Extended Schools programme and the main capital funding programme for education, Building Schools for the Future. Interviewees also emphasised the integration between NOPES and centrally directed revenue programmes, in particular School Sports Partnerships. However, with regard to specific, local strategies the Fund's Policy Advisor was unsure as to how they could relate to the NOPES programme once facilities opened. Although there was a wish that there would be a supportive link between NOPES facilities and local strategies beyond the application phase of the programme, the Policy Director was uncertain as to the way in which local strategies were generally utilised:

> *I don't know what is happening with [local strategies]. I wouldn't know, I've never worked in a local authority. I wouldn't know once you've written a strategy what happens to it. Does it literally just gather dust on a shelf and nothing happen? I just don't know.*

Another interesting aspect, identified in the previous paragraph and from the comments of interviewees, was the proposed nature of the link between NOPES and other strategies and programmes. The Fund's Policy Advisor highlighted more than once that what 'this funding should do is help to implement these strategies and build on what you have already got and try and bring that to fruition'. In particular, one governmental interviewee suggested that NOPES could help 'some of our School Sports Partnerships … bring the community in'. Thus, whether conscious on the part of the Fund and government or not, the proposed link between NOPES and other strategies appeared to be somewhat unidirectional with NOPES facilitating other strategies rather than vice versa. Perhaps this was a natural consequence of NOPES being a capital, facilities programme. However it might, as a national policy direction, have had implications for how the NOPES programme was managed in the long term at a local level. This issue shall be addressed again in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight.

5.3 Aspirations for Local Partnerships

5.3.1 Role of Partnership

The anticipated role of partnerships at a local authority level[7] will be examined first. Upon receiving notification of their notional NOPES allocation and documents from the Fund on the vision for the programme and application procedures, LEAs were expected to bring together a range of organisations to determine the projects that there were to fund. As such the Fund expected that these local partnerships in each LEA area were to discuss and make top-down decisions on schools and other facilities to benefit from NOPES funding. The Fund specified that one of the key factors in this decision was to be the fit of proposed projects with the wider strategic context in the LEA area. Emphasising a bottom-up role, the Policy Director from DfES also stressed utilising partnerships to consult widely about the selection of projects. The decisions taken on projects to be funded in their portfolio were submitted by LEAs in their applications to the Fund. How these applications were assessed will be considered later in Section 5.4.

The local NOPES partnerships were expected to manage the NOPES programme in their LEA area. It was anticipated that this would involve local partnerships collectively making further strategic decisions on, for example, any major changes to projects within their portfolio. Local partnerships were also expected to manage and oversee the more operational processes for the portfolio, doing ‘a lot of legwork so that schools did not have to’ (DfES Project Director). These processes included all individual projects submitting separate applications and the subsequent construction of new facilities. Highlighting a potential weakness, due to its position as a Lottery distribution body, the Fund viewed the end of construction of facilities as representing the end of the funding programme. As such, the Fund had little input, beyond a limited monitoring role, post-opening into any aspect of NOPES projects (a feature discussed in more detail in Section 5.4).

[7] For ease and clarity, these partnerships will be referred to as local partnerships from this point onwards.

There was a lack of clarity on the role of partnerships at local authority level after construction of projects finished. The Fund was unclear, particularly in its documentation, on any potential role for local partnerships during this period. The Fund's Policy Advisor said that he could 'possibly argue' that local partnerships should continue in order to monitor and evaluate the NOPES projects against the original aims and aspirations for the portfolio. This interviewee recognised that this would involve the group taking a certain level of ownership of the NOPES portfolio in the longer term. It is, therefore, perhaps surprising that neither the Fund's Policy Advisor nor any NOPES documentation suggested that local partnerships could have a further role in supporting projects in achieving these aims and aspirations. Linking with the lack of clear guidance, both governmental interviewees emphasised that responsibility for a continuing role rested with the local partnerships themselves, the DCMS representative declaring a view that local partnerships were 'very naïve' not to take a role in ensuring projects delivered on original aspirations. The Project Manager from DfES thought a continued role for partnerships was more of a 'local decision' and suggested that School Sport Partnerships could take over much of the role in supporting projects.

Despite this lack of clarity as to the continued involvement of local partnerships in the NOPES programme, the Fund's Policy Advisor and the Project Director from DfES hoped for wider, ongoing collaborative benefits in the field of PE and sport. The Fund's Policy Advisor stated a broad aspiration that he 'hoped this money would be a catalyst for cross-agenda working at a local level'. Other responses suggested an even clearer aspiration that the steering group itself would continue to consider wider issues concerned with PE and sport in the local authority area. For example, the Project Director from DfES hoped that 'the [NOPES] process would help build those partnerships, such as School Sport Partnerships, that are needed to take forward the school sport strategy'. The Fund's Policy Advisor recognised that these were quite high aspirations which might only be achieved by more 'forward looking' local authorities.

5.3.2 Membership of Partnerships

LEAs were key to the NOPES programme and, as befitted this status, were the recipients of the nominal allocation of funding. As the senior policy advisor from DCMS emphasised, it was the LEAs that were ultimately responsible for this funding, in particular the Chief Executives of LEAs who had to sign up to the 'deliverability of the projects'. However, the Fund's Policy Advisor believed that sport was not a high priority for some LEAs and, therefore, they may not have had the staff to deliver the NOPES programme themselves. Thus, LEAs were required to build local partnerships but were given some freedom as to how they did so. As shall be discussed with respect to forms of partnership later, these arrangements gave local government control over the development of partnerships as well as a position of power within them. In fact, the DCMS Senior Policy Advisor suggested that LEAs should have been the 'driving force' behind partnerships, providing 'a key contact point for all the different people to feed into' (a comment which suggests a certain form of partnership in itself).

Although LEAs were given a clear role in developing partnerships, the Fund's Policy Advisor was unsure as to the extent to which they could meet the Fund's aspirations in this regard. Before the NOPES programme, the Fund's Policy Advisor suggested that potential members of partnerships may have had little prior experience of working together. The governmental interviewees suggested that local authorities were often 'insular' with there commonly being 'historical' barriers between local authority departments responsible for sport and education. The Fund's policy advisor believed that the experience of the Fund in the NOPES programmes confirmed that those LEAs which did not have prior relationships with potential partners had more difficulty in establishing partnerships. Furthermore, as the Project Director from DfES pointed out, at the outset of the NOPES programme, the organisational and policy context of school sport and the relationships between actors in this context were going through a period of rapid development and change. Taking these factors into consideration, more

than one interviewee believed at the outset that LEAs could be categorised into those that already had the capacity for the necessary partnership working (suggested as between a quarter and a third of LEAs), those that would require support to facilitate partnership working (suggested as between a third and a half of LEAs), and those that would always struggle to develop effective partnerships (suggested as between a quarter and a third of LEAs).

Through both seminars and documented guidance notes, the Fund suggested a range of potential partners for LEAs. These suggested organisations included national and regional organisations such as National Governing Bodies of Sport, Sport England and the Youth Sport Trust as well as more local agencies such as representatives of local authority leisure departments and Primary Care Trusts. Furthermore, the Fund's guidance stated that, where they existed 'it is expected that Local Strategic Partnerships will play a central role in developing grants schemes' (NOF, 2001, p3). Potential partners identified by the Fund also included those at the even more local level of Specialist Sports Colleges, members of School Sports Partnerships and Head Teachers themselves. This represents a broad range of potential partners with vastly different levels of power and resources. However, the Policy Advisor stated that the Fund did not want to be 'prescriptive' in terms of which of these organisations LEAs were to involve in the local partnerships.

5.3.3 Form of Partnerships

Throughout the interview, the Fund's Policy Advisor suggested that the Fund did not have a view on the form that local partnerships should take. Although there was some expectation that partnership groups would be formed to govern the development of the NOPES programme in the LEA area, the Fund, for example, did not have a 'view on whether those groups should be formally constituted'. It was suggested by the Fund's Policy Advisor that at the outset there was an understanding that there would be no typical form that local authority level partnerships would take.

Interestingly, however the two government interviewees suggested that a more networked form of partnership was appropriate with LEAs as a ‘hub of the different sports groups’. Consideration will be given in the conclusion of this chapter as to the form that partnerships may take given the expectations of their role and membership described in the previous sections.

5.4 Governance of the NOPES programme

The purpose of this section is to examine how the Fund governed the NOPES programme and, in particular, the local partnerships that were to develop the programme in each LEA area. Interestingly, both governmental interviewees emphasised that the governance of the NOPES programme, once it had initially been conceived as a policy, was entirely a matter for the Fund which would put in place the ‘framework’ by which decisions on funding would be made.

In general, the Fund’s Policy Advisor recognised that for the Fund the governance of the NOPES programme, as with all its programmes, was affected by two conflicting concerns. Firstly, the Fund was required to have stringent rules in place to govern the NOPES programme due to the need for the Fund to be accountable for the money it distributed. The Fund also had a responsibility to attempt to ensure that the desired outcomes were met. The level of control required by the Fund to achieve this was somewhat at odds with the Fund’s second concern which was to allow local decision making and ownership within the programme. The lack of clarity in the following quote from the DCMS Senior Policy Advisor, when speaking about the governance of NOPES, demonstrates the difficulties in the tension between these concerns:

> *It’s a balance in that the local authorities knew what their responsibilities were in order to deliver it. But it was for the Big Lottery Fund to get these messages down to local authorities to say “this is what we want you to do and what your role is”*

In practice, the Fund's Policy Advisor believed that 'we haven't perhaps allowed that level of ownership to happen. We have still governed the programme quite a lot from here centrally'. Part of the reason for the level of central governance was the Fund's lack of confidence in a proportion of LEAs which, it was believed, were not effective enough to guarantee accountability despite being statutory organisations. However, due to its status as a quango distributing Lottery funding, there were limitations as to the extent that the Fund could and wished to govern those LEAs responsible for the NOPES programme at a local level. As the Fund's Policy Advisor suggested of those LEAs struggling to develop effective partnerships 'perhaps we could have done more there, but equally is that the responsibility of a Lottery distributor? Is that really down to us to do that?' The DCMS Senior Policy Advisor also believed that it was an internal issue for local authorities to ensure that they were able to deliver the NOPES outcomes.

The power that the Fund did have to govern or steer those organisations developing the NOPES programme in their localities came ultimately from the money that the Fund was making available to them. As an example concerned with partnership in particular, the Fund's guidance stated that 'grant schemes will only receive funding if they involve a range of other partners' (NOF, 2001, p3). It was also suggested by the Fund's Policy Advisor that the Fund hoped that the money it was making available would promote wider changes by being 'a catalyst for cross-agenda working at a local level' and increasing the profile of sport as an issue for LEAs to address. Similarly, the DCMS Senior Policy Advisor believed that generally the 'carrot' of substantial funding did a 'lot of good for local authorities'. That this 'good' could be equated with addressing priorities of central government was suggested by a further quote from the same interviewee:

> *We're trying to get those messages down through local authorities right down through schools: "you have got to learn how to open up those [school] facilities to wider community use"*

This influence through capital funding resonates with Rhodes' (1999) description of how resources are used to steer the structures associated with new forms of governance.

In all of its programmes, the Fund's main tool to utilise the influence it gained through the resources it made available was the assessment of funding applications. In the NOPES programme, a two stage application process was implemented. In 'Stage 1' applications, LEAs (as the organisation ultimately responsible for the funding) were required to submit information on their whole portfolio. Once this was accepted by the Fund, 'Stage 2' applications were required for each project in the portfolio. As partnerships at portfolio-level were included in the assessment by the Fund at Stage 1, this process shall be considered in some detail here.

In general terms, the Fund's Policy Advisor stated that at Stage 1 the Fund 'wanted to be almost light touch … I was keen that at Stage 1 we kept it quite broad, quite strategic'. In fact, from the perspective of local authority staff, reported in the NOPES Year 2 evaluation report (Loughborough Partnership, 2005), the Stage 1 process was found by applicants to be arduous and time consuming. This was somewhat recognised by the Fund's Policy Advisor who wondered if the application process had been too prescriptive.

Stage 1 applications were assessed according to three of ten generic criteria that the Fund used for all its programmes. These criteria were:

1. *The grant scheme demonstrates that it meets our priorities for the programme.*
2. *The applicant can demonstrate evidence of need.*
3. *Structures for managing the partnership to the benefit of the grant scheme are well thought through allowing partners to participate on an equal basis.*

These criteria were interconnected in the sense that the Fund expected a range of organisations to be involved in order for an adequate justification of need to be provided.

An additional comment can be made regarding the assessment of partnerships in particular. The Fund's assessment of partnerships mainly considered the range of organisations involved rather than the nature of the partnership itself. If a particular type of organisation had not been involved or at least consulted the Fund would request that they were. By contrast, the Fund did not assess whether the partnership had any formal procedures (e.g. terms of reference) or how it made its decisions about which projects to submit for funding. Instead it was the outputs of this decision making process that were assessed. Given that the governmentality literature suggests that bidding processes are used to promote the norms and values of central government (Raco & Imrie, 2000), it is interesting that the value of partnerships was promoted but not the way in which partnership working was to be conducted.

Besides the assessment process, the Fund also used a number of more indirect methods to steer and govern the NOPES programme. The prescription of six desired outcomes for the NOPES programme was another example of the use of target setting as a technique by which central government could ensure that its own objectives were to be met. These desired outcomes were also backed up by documentation such as the 'Building for the Future' vision document (NOF, 2001) and the application guidance notes. More personalised methods of steering included seminars organised by the Fund for LEAs and the contact between the Fund's staff and those people involved in the NOPES programme at a local level. Work conducted by Fund staff was more targeted at those LEAs that were deemed not to be meeting the criteria set for the NOPES programme. As the Fund's Policy Advisor said 'there were perhaps some LEAs that needed a bit more development work and support from our case managers as to exactly what we are looking for'. However, it was suggested that the Fund did not have sufficient capacity of human resources to influence LEAs to a

large extent through these methods. Moreover, government departments were not involved in the NOPES programme to the extent of influencing any of the processes of the programme.

The theoretical literature on governance and governmentality also highlights the use of monitoring and evaluation as a tool to steer conduct. Although the Fund implemented their own monitoring of projects and an external evaluation was commissioned, the Fund's Policy Advisor did not emphasise their role in the Fund's steering of partnerships. Similar to the assessment process, monitoring, conducted only one year after facilities opened, only assessed the outputs of the programme at project-level and whether funding had been spent on what had been described in the applications. As the Project Director from DfES stated little 'direction' could result from this monitoring as by that point facilities had been built and little capital could be 'clawed back' by the Fund. As to any potential examination of the longer term role of partnerships, the Fund's Policy Advisor suggested that 'that's not really our [the Fund's] problem'.

5.5 Conclusions

This chapter has examined national perspectives on the NOPES programme, with a specific focus on aspirations for local partnerships and collaboration as well as the governance mechanisms that could be used to achieve these aspirations. In light of the data presented in this chapter, and the information provided on the Fund in Chapter Two, three themes will be examined in this concluding section: firstly, the promotion of partnership working, secondly, the links between the Lottery, the NOPES programme and the theoretical concepts relating to partnership and collaboration identified in Chapter Two and, finally, the level of central control from the government and Lottery distributing bodies.

The Fund obviously placed partnership working at the centre of its ethos and as such it was a key element of the NOPES programme. This reflected the increased use and promotion of partnerships at all levels by the Blair

government. However, despite giving local partnerships a clearly articulated short-term role in the NOPES programme, the Fund was less clear as to its expectations regarding the details of partnership working, particularly in the longer term.

The second theme, concerning the relationship of the NOPES programme as a whole with theoretical concepts related to partnership and collaboration, merits a fuller analysis. In particular, analysis of how the central aspirations for local authority-level partnerships relate to the theoretical concepts of regimes and policy networks is important to the study. Through this analysis, the purpose is not to suggest that the partnerships themselves may represent policy networks or regimes. Rather the analysis examines how the central aspirations for these partnerships may indicate the existence of wider policy networks and regimes in local authority areas. The hope of the Fund's Policy Advisor, that NOPES partnerships could become longer term structures in some areas, also reflects the notion that these partnerships may bear similarities to the wider collaborative context. Before presenting this analysis, a final comment is needed regarding the theoretical concept of collaborative advantage. This concept was not utilised in this analysis since the evidence provided by the Fund and central government interviewees mainly concerned the structural features of partnerships, rather than the agential relationships and processes within them to which the concept of collaborative advantage mainly refers.

Marsh & Rhodes' (1992) typology of policy networks, ranging from policy communities to issue networks, is particularly useful in analysing the aspirations for local NOPES partnerships as potentially illustrative of wider networks. This typology categorises policy networks by membership, resources, power and integration. How the aspirations of the Fund and governmental interviewees resemble each of these features will now be considered.

In terms of membership, if LEAs were to involve all the organisations suggested by the Fund in local NOPES partnerships, then these members would have to be drawn from a wide and diverse network of individuals and agencies including representatives of both local and national agencies. This membership would therefore be typical of issue networks. The Marsh & Rhodes' (1992) typology distinguishes between resources held by the members of the policy network and the resources that these members have within their own organisations. The fact that the LEA had ultimate control over NOPES funding would certainly provide it with a significant additional resource within any network of which it was a member. However, the Fund's Policy Advisor's doubt over the ability of all LEAs to form partnerships suggests that other resources, such as relevant skills and experience, may have been limited. Both of these features are more resonant of issue networks than policy communities.

Conversely, the Fund's expectation that the local partnerships were to make a top-down decision on selection of projects suggested that they believed that partnership members had the internal resources to have this decision accepted, not only within the partnership but also, potentially, within a wider network. This feature is more indicative of policy communities. Finally, with regard to integration, the Fund's lack of clarity regarding the prior history of networks or, ultimately, the future of local NOPES partnerships is not strongly indicative of either policy communities or issue networks. This specific point is, actually, a microcosm of the overall analysis with respect to policy networks in that it suggests that, from the viewpoint of the Fund and central government, NOPES partnerships could reside within, or be indicative of, different types of network ranging from policy communities to issue networks.

Regime theory is the other framework identified in Chapter Three by which central aspirations for local NOPES partnerships can be analysed. Such an analysis may be particularly relevant since NOPES funding can be seen as one of the resources that are required by regimes in order to fulfil their social production function (Mossberger & Stoker, 2001). However, the acquisition

of these resources does not in itself significantly identify local NOPES partnerships with particular forms of regimes. Nonetheless, the directive that the NOPES programme was to be directed at disadvantaged communities indicates an aspiration in common with Stoker & Mossberger's (1994) symbolic regime type or Stone's (1993) middle class progressive or lower class opportunity regimes. Interestingly, symbolic, middle class progressive and lower class opportunity regimes all, to some extent, have involvement by local communities (Stone, 1993; Stoker & Mossberger, 1994). However, NOPES guidelines and the interviewees did not promote voluntary or community sector involvement in local NOPES partnerships to any great extent. As with policy networks, it appears that central aspirations for local NOPES partnerships did not particularly reflect a specific type of regime presented in typologies in the literature.

One final comment with regard to regime theory is particularly relevant at this point. The aspirations of the Fund's Policy Advisor and Project Director from DfES, that NOPES partnerships would continue to consider PE, school and community sport beyond the life of the programme itself, were noted in the Section 5.3.1. Although Ward (1997) suggests that that co-operation in funding applications may be a catalyst for the formation of a regime, Stone (1989, p236) suggests that 'the creation of a regime from scratch is imaginable but not likely'. Therefore, the literature suggests that the chance of local NOPES partnerships coalescing into some form of regime could be considered as remote.

Two concluding points can be made about the preceding analysis. Firstly, as identified above, it is apparent that the local partnerships aspired to by the Fund do not reflect particular types of policy networks or regimes identified in the theoretical literature. It may be argued that this was due to the Fund and central government lacking a consistent, coherent vision of the types of local partnerships that they hoped LEAs would develop or a detailed understanding of networks that existed at a local level. Secondly, despite these aspirations not matching the specific classifications of either policy networks or regimes, these theoretical concepts have been shown to have

utility in analysing the types of partnership and collaborative relationships aspired to. Both of these concluding points raise a number of issues for empirical examination in the three case studies:

- To what extent were the aspirations of the Fund and central government for local partnerships met?
- How do partnerships, and their wider collaborative context, in the case studies relate to the theoretical concepts of regimes and policy networks?
- What explanatory power do these theoretical concepts have in analysing NOPES policy processes?

To return, finally, to the third theme of the chapter, that of central control, it is evident that the Fund used techniques described in the governance and governmentality literature to steer organisations involved in the NOPES programme at a local level. In particular, central government and the Fund gained a significant degree of influence at the local level through the provision of Lottery funding. However, the Fund's application, monitoring and evaluation systems tended to focus on outputs, outcomes and financial accountability rather than processes such as partnership and collaboration. Combined with a degree of ambiguity as to the extent to which the Fund, as a Lottery provider, should involve itself in the operation of local government, these features suggest that the level of central governance in the NOPES programme was not sufficient to fully ensure that the Fund's aspirations, particularly with regard to partnership, were met. The issues raised in this chapter, and particularly in the conclusions to it, will be relevant to the discussion in the following chapters of empirical findings in each of the case studies.

Chapter Six: Northtown Case Study

6.1 Introduction

Northtown is a large metropolitan area in the north of England with a population of over 700,000. Statistics from 2001 showed that, although deprivation within the city was below the national average, there were areas of deprivation in Northtown with 12 of the 33 wards being in the 20 percent most deprived wards in the country. The proportion of the population from an ethnic minority background was also high.

Northtown City Council was a unitary authority. Until 2004, Northtown City Council had been dominated by the Labour Party for a number of years. Although Labour remained the largest party after council elections in 2004, a coalition of Conservatives, Liberal Democrats and independent councillors took control of the council. Beneath the executive committee of the city council, there were ten local area committees made up of elected councillors. There were two area committees for each of the five administrative wedges of the city designated by the local authority.

Sport and Active Recreation was one of eight sections within the Learning & Leisure Department of the local authority. This section had responsibility for both sport and leisure facilities as well as sports development. As well as there being a number of sport-specific officers, there was also a strong focus on community sport within sports development with a full-time community sports development officer employed in each of the five wedges in the city.

Education functions of the local authority in Northtown were undertaken by a not-for-profit company, Education Northtown. This company was formed in 2001 following a directive from the Secretary of State for Education which, in turn, was a response to a critical OFSTED report in 2000. Although there

was some private sector involvement in the company, Education Northtown was wholly owned by Northtown City Council.

Following this introduction, the chapter has four sections. First, the partnership arrangements for developing the New Opportunities for PE and Sport (NOPES) programme in the Northtown will be described. The second section will examine how the NOPES programme, and the personnel, agencies and structures involved in it, were linked to the wider collaborative context in Northtown. The policy process, and outputs of this process, will then be discussed in the third section. The ongoing development of the NOPES programme from initial conception to development of facilities once built will be included in this third section. The final section of the chapter will provide an initial discussion of key themes in the Northtown case study.

Each of the first three sections will be further divided into subsections covering issues at portfolio and project levels. Partnership, collaboration and processes will be considered at three particular NOPES projects:

- A new floodlit, tarmac multi-use games area and changing facilities together with an extended playground area based at Abbott Primary School. The project received £405,724 of NOPES funding which was combined with partnership funding of £445,000 from a company whose factory was adjacent to the school.
- A new full-sized artificial turf pitch, changing rooms and a cycle skills circuit at Babcock High School. NOPES funding of £948,340 was allocated to the project. A further £30,000 was contributed to the project by a local Millennium Community Trust.
- New facilities located at Northtown Sailing Centre. Prior to the instigation of the NOPES project, the Sailing Centre had been based in a portacabin next to a boatyard. NOPES funding of £804,000 was used to redevelop and extend a youth activities building that was situated adjacent to the boatyard. Previously this

building was operated by the Youth Service but after the renovation it was managed as part of the Sailing Centre.

All three projects received NOPES revenue funding for a member of staff to support the development of the project.

6.2 Partnerships in the NOPES Programme

6.2.1 Portfolio Level

The initial responsibility for developing the portfolio-level NOPES partnership in Northtown fell to the Corporate Initiatives Team Leader from Education Northtown. Leading funding applications and the development of new education initiatives, such as NOPES, was the main focus of the work of the Corporate Initiatives Team. The Team Leader brought together an initial steering group for the programme. This group consisted of a number of senior personnel from Education Northtown, the Learning & Leisure and Community Planning & Regeneration Departments of Northtown City Council. Within Northtown, some of the members of the steering group had substantial previous experience of working with one another and the Head of Sport believed that this was a key factor more generally in enabling NOPES partnership structures to be effective.

Following the success of a similar appointment in the Space for Sports and Arts programme, the steering group decided that the employment of a Portfolio Manager was necessary to lead the development of the portfolio after the initial choice of projects had been made. Staff from the Big Lottery Fund also firmly encouraged such an appointment and specified that the post be located within Education Northtown. In fact, the individual appointed as portfolio manager had previous experience of developing similar capital projects in the city, having performed the same leadership role in the Space for Sports and Arts programme.

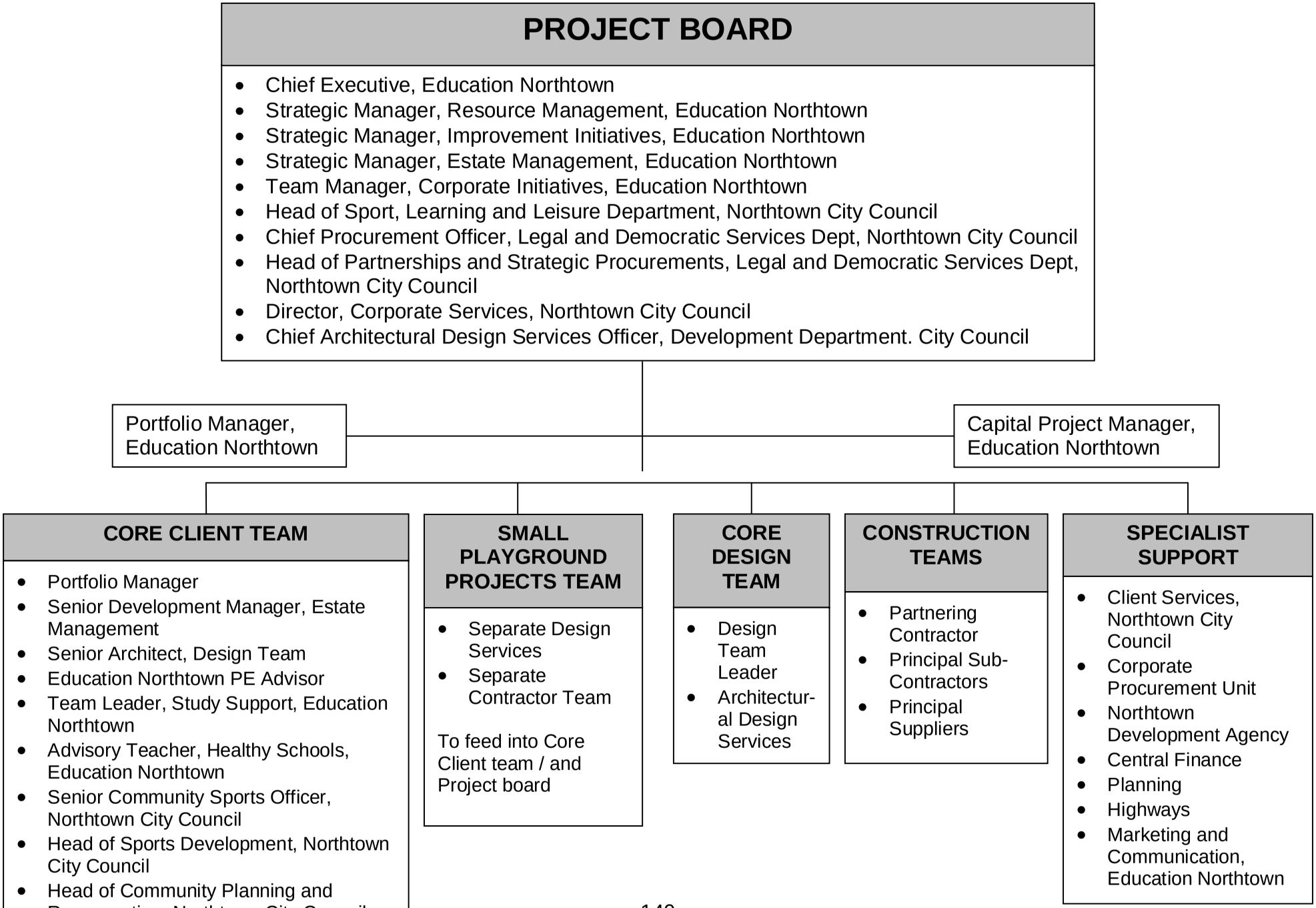
In creating the Portfolio Manager post, the steering group recognised that there was not sufficient spare human resource capacity amongst their number to progress the NOPES programme in what they saw to be the most effective manner. This suggests that although a steering group in which members had relatively equal powers was able to make initial policy decisions, the subsequent implementation of these policy decisions required clear leadership through a particular individual. The Portfolio Manager also played a large role in developing collaboration with ‘anybody and everybody’ with an interest in the programme.

Although the need for overall leadership of the NOPES programme was identified by staff in Northtown, partnership was still viewed as very important in managing the programme after selection, and through construction, of projects. The task of creating an inter-organisational structure to manage the design and construction of the NOPES portfolio was an early one for the Portfolio Manager. The resulting structure, which replaced the original steering group, encompassed the entire NOPES portfolio from strategic, portfolio-level groups to individual projects. The portfolio-level structure is shown in Figure 2 (overleaf).

Before the different parts of the structure are described, a few general comments about the structure as a whole are appropriate. First, the structure highlighted the priority given to partnership working within Northtown. The numerous groups within the structure contained members from a range of different organisations and sections within these organisations. More detail will be given on these members when each of the main groups is considered in more detail later in this section.

Secondly, the structure was highly formalised and well documented. Each of the groups, and the individuals within these groups, in the structure had their roles and responsibilities clearly documented. Interviewees at the portfolio-level viewed the structure positively because it allowed individuals to understand their role in the NOPES programme. From the perspective of individual projects, the Senior Sports Development Officer involved in the

Figure 2: Northtown NOPES Strategic Structure (Adapted from Northtown City Council (undated))



Northtown Sailing Centre project stated a commonly held view that they were ‘aware of, in the background, the overarching city-wide group in place’. Personnel at each project had contacts with individuals within the city-wide structure, often as part of their departmental hierarchies.

Finally, the structure was a complex one that required significant personal skills and commitment of human resources. These issues were identified by interviewees themselves. As the Portfolio Manager commented:

> *I think one of the biggest challenges was … just how complex the communication had to be at so many different levels, all at once to deliver something so quickly, because it was tight timescales.*

Furthermore, the effective operation of the structure and individual groups required a significant time input from the individuals involved. This issue was particularly pertinent to key staff within the structure, for example the NOPES portfolio manager who described the amount of meetings she personally attended as ‘phenomenal’.

As with all similar capital projects in Northtown, the structure was headed by a Project Board which was composed of many of the original members of the steering group. For example, the Head of Sport within the city council and Education Northtown’s Corporate Initiatives Team Leader were members of the Project Board which was chaired by the Chief Executive of Education Northtown.

Beneath the Project Board, key groups were the Core Client Team and the Core Design Team. Like the project board, the Core Client Team was a cross-departmental group consisting of officers responsible for strategic policy development in different areas. The group included some members of the original steering group, such as the Head of Sports Development, and new members such as a senior officer from the Youth Service. The majority of the personnel on the Core Client Team had immediate superiors sitting on the Project Board. The group met formally once every six weeks and as

such had more regular input than the Project Board. Informal contact between particular members of the Core Client Team happened on a regular basis outside of formal meetings.

The Core Design Team was responsible for the capital build aspects of the NOPES portfolio. As such it was comprised of both internal staff and external contractors. As it was less directly concerned with PE and sport, a reduced emphasis in the research process was given to the Core Design Team. Beneath the Core Design Team were individual site teams for each project which included project managers from Education Northtown, external architects, school representatives and construction contractors.

Besides the portfolio manager, another key individual in the structure was the Capital Projects Manager. This individual, employed by Education Northtown, was responsible for £50m of school capital works annually, in addition to NOPES funding. There was evidence of a strong, professional relationship between the Portfolio Manager and the Capital Projects Manager which developed over the duration of working together on the NOPES programme. The Capital Project Manager's role, subsequent to the choice of projects, was to deliver projects from design through to end of construction. For example, the Capital Projects Manager was to agree the 'quality of design, materials and construction and the project budget in line with NOF requirements' (Northtown City Council, undated, p6).

Also of importance throughout the whole portfolio was a team of external leisure consultants engaged by Education Northtown as 'facilitators' to support projects through the Stage 2 application process to the Fund. It is of interest that the particular consultants commissioned had been employed previously within Northtown. The leisure consultants' main point of liaison, besides individual projects, was the Portfolio Manager. The Head of Sports Development affirmed a commonly held view that the involvement of external consultants was a 'critical decision' which supported the NOPES portfolio by bringing in an outside source of expertise in the design and operation of sports facilities. Because of their expertise, and through

demonstrating their successes elsewhere, the consultants were able to ‘convince schools that [the structure developed for NOPES was] a workable partnership’ (Head of Sports Development). This comment perhaps reflects the lack of confidence held by schools in the local authority that was evidenced in the 2000 OFSTED report. It was also suggested that the leisure consultants were able to elicit greater co-operation from the schools involved in the NOPES programme. This was attributed to the external position of the leisure consultants compared to the local authority and Education Northtown in whom, the Head of Sports Development intimated, the schools lacked trust at the outset.

Subsequently, close to the point where each NOPES facility opened, the external consultants were re-employed by Education Northtown for a short period to support each of the projects to revise the original business and development plans in the light of any changes in the context of the project. Although the consultants were not formally members of NOPES structures during this period, they remained in close contact with the network of individuals involved at portfolio level. The outcomes of the re-employment of external consultants will be considered further in the policy section of this chapter.

The portfolio-level NOPES structures were revised around the same time as the external consultants were re-employed. The original NOPES structure (as shown in Figure 2) was designed to specifically manage the process of facility construction. During this process, key stakeholders recognised that changes to the structure would have to be made once facilities opened. As the NOPES programme progressed and human resource pressures connected with application, design and construction reduced, a less formalised, network structure emerged at portfolio level. The Portfolio Manager commented that the structure ‘is not as strong as it was because there has been no need for it to be quite so formal. This has dissolved and turned in a more ad-hoc direction’.

The Portfolio Manager, the Head of Sports Development and Capital Projects Manager remained key members of this network and were important contacts for all stakeholders involved in NOPES. The importance of communication within the network increased as the formal structure for the NOPES programmes dissolved, as demonstrated by the Portfolio Manager's comment that stakeholders were 'not getting too concerned about structures anymore. It's [now] more logical about being able to communicate'. The meeting-based communication style enacted within the formalised portfolio-level structure was replaced within the network by more informal forms of communication such as email and phone calls.

During this phase the role of the Portfolio Manager also changed significantly. Rather than working to facilitate the operation of portfolio-level structures, the Portfolio Manager began, as facilities neared completion, to work more with individual projects. The extent of time that the Portfolio Manager committed to individual projects was determined by the levels of experience and expertise of staff at these projects. For example, as shall be described in more detail later, staff at Babcock High School had significant leisure management experience and thus had little contact with the Portfolio Manager after the opening of their NOPES facility. Alternatively, the Portfolio Manager spent more time working with staff at Abbott Primary School who initially faced difficulties.

The greater involvement of the Portfolio Manager at project-level came at a time when significant responsibility for managing the NOPES programme was devolved to project-level. The interaction between the portfolio- and project-levels at this stage was described by the Head of Sports Development who believed that projects 'need[ed] the link into the broader network but they [didn't] need that to manage local challenges'. Partnerships for the NOPES programme at the three projects included in this case study will be considered in the next subsection.

6.2.2 Project Level

Abbott Primary School

Prior to the opening of the multi-use games area at Abbott Primary School, a management group was formed. This group consisted of:

- the Chair of School Governors (who also chaired the management group)
- the Head Teacher of Abbott Primary School
- the school's PE Co-ordinator
- a Community Sports Development Officer from the local area
- a local Youth and Community Worker based at a local community centre
- a representative of a local, voluntary sector football club.

The Community Sports Development Officer provided one link to the portfolio-level structure through his position in the Sports Development Unit. As was stated above, the Portfolio Manager also invested a significant amount of time with this project in the year after the project opened.

In the period from the initial conception of the NOPES project to completion of construction there were significant changes in the individuals who held key roles in the project. The Head Teacher at the time of the project's conception and application had been the main source of direction for the project. However, during the construction process, this individual moved on and a replacement Head Teacher was employed. Furthermore, after opening the Chair of the School Governors resigned his position on the management group stating 'it is now time for somebody else to take the project forward' (Chair of Governors, 2005).

The group had met once by the time that the facility opened. It was commented by the Chair of Governors that the group could have met earlier during the construction process to ensure that an effective start was made

when the facility opened. In this initial period, the Community Sports Development Officer believed that the group was ‘still a little bit uncertain of its role’. The lack of continuity amongst project staff contributed to this problem as it was the original Head Teacher who had initially conceived of the group in the project’s application plans.

Abbott Primary School was ultimately responsible for the management of the facility for both school and community use. In this respect, staff from the school lacked experience and expertise in facility development, particularly within the wider community. As a result, prior to opening, members of the management group suggested that they would be reliant on a Sports Development Officer to be employed at the project through NOPES revenue funding. The Head Teacher stated that ‘all this [project] hinges on getting the right person’ for the role. Members of the management group were looking for the individual employed to provide overall leadership and direction for the project as well as being responsible for operational matters. However, the lack of facility development expertise amongst existing school staff meant that this individual was to be employed in a context where specialist support may not have been available.

Babcock High School

The management group at Babcock High School was chaired by the school’s Facilities Manager who had previous experience of managing private sector leisure facilities. Other members of the management group were:

- the Head Teacher
- the Head of PE
- the Site Manager
- the revenue-funded Sports Development Officer
- the School Sport Co-ordinator
- the Extended Schools Officer (all school staff)

- a Senior Community Sport Development Officer from Northtown City Council
- a local representative of the Youth Service
- representatives of local football and cycling voluntary groups.

This membership represented a wide variety of sectors and organisations. Besides school and local authority staff, there were representatives from the voluntary sector. School staff considered that voluntary sector involvement was important to avoid the project becoming ‘insular’ or overly focused on the school itself.

The management group met twice before the new facilities opened and met subsequently on a bi-monthly basis. Initially, the role of the group was to make sure that the NOPES facilities were designed and built as the group members hoped. The group was also responsible for the recruitment and selection of the Sports Development Officer employed with NOPES revenue funding. Upon opening, the role of the group changed to providing direction and overseeing the development of all the school’s sport facilities, including a newly built sports hall as well as the artificial turf pitch funded by NOPES. From the school’s perspective, the group ‘ensured this [the project] is part of a holistic whole school endeavour’ (Head Teacher). From the community perspective, it also allowed representatives with an interest in that area to provide input to the project.

As with Abbott Primary School, the Sports Development Officer was a key human resource within the project. Contrasting with the expectations of leadership from the officer at Abbott Primary School, the Sports Development Officer was valued for reducing the workload of staff from the school’s senior management and facilities management teams. The Portfolio Manager believed that using additional human resources in this way, to support a strong infrastructure that was already in place, was a more efficient use of revenue funding than the employment of staff in a leadership role at Abbott Primary School. The Sports Development Officer had a

specific role to diversify the sports and activities programme outside of the school day. This role included conducting outreach work with specific local community groups to attract them towards use of the school's sports facilities.

Northtown Sailing Centre

Prior to the NOPES facility opening, the management group at Northtown Sailing Centre was less established than those at Abbott Primary School and, in particular, at Babcock High School. The core of a management group was in place prior to opening and consisted of the Sports Development Officer for Outdoor Pursuits, a School Sports Partnership Development Manager, the Senior Sports Development Manager and a Youth Service officer. The Sports Development Officer for Outdoor Pursuits was based within the Sport and Active Recreation Section of Northtown City Council.

The role of the management group was minimal prior to the opening of the NOPES facility. Project staff expected that further representatives from community organisations would be included in the management group upon the opening of the facility. Also, project staff expected the group's role to become clearer and consist mainly of overseeing the enactment of business and development plans written during the NOPES application process. However, in general, a management group structure was very new to those involved in the management of the centre, one whom described the ongoing development of the group as a process of 'suck it and see' (Senior Sports Development Officer).

Although information about the management group after the opening of the facility was unavailable from project staff, the comments of the Portfolio Manager regarding it are of interest. Through the initial period post-opening of the facility, the management group suffered from a lack of continuity with many changes of personnel amongst the key members of the group. As a result, the Portfolio Manager commented that the 'culture change

[associated with the new arrangements for the centre] has got to start all over again'.

6.3 The Collaborative Context of the NOPES Programme

6.3.1 Portfolio Level

Profile and strategic focus for PE and sport

Evidence from a variety of sources suggested that issues around sport and physical activity had a reasonably high profile in Northtown. A typical comment from an officer from an external, national sports agency commented that the approach of Northtown to PE and sport

> *comes from the will of the local political agenda and those people responding to the needs of the people in [Northtown] and there is a desire for those people to engage with physical activity. I think there is a fundamental belief that physical activity leads to the health and well-being of the local community.*

The issue of responding to local needs raised in this quote is an issue that will be revisited later in this section. As shall be examined in detail below, the inclusion of sport in the Local Strategic Partnership and the commitment of a number of partners to the local Sport and Active Recreation Strategy also suggested that sport was an important issue in Northtown.

Within the local authority, the Head of Sport in Northtown agreed with this assessment commenting that 'the fact that the council still spends a considerable amount on sport demonstrates that it is still a sufficient priority'. However, he did qualify this view by suggesting that amongst local councillors sport remained a secondary consideration next to more fundamental priorities such as children's and social work services. As a result, he identified an ongoing need to justify the contribution of sport to other policy agendas that were regarded as more important in Northtown.

Similarly, within Education Northtown, the Health Initiatives Team Leader commented that the contribution of physical activity to health and, more generally, the Every Child Matters agenda enabled it to have a 'growing' prominence within the organisation. In addition, the chief executive of Education Northtown was described as a 'very vocal and consistent advocate' for physical activity which had raised the prominence of the issue both within and beyond the organisation.

As suggested in the opening paragraph, the local Sport and Active Recreation Strategy, entitled 'Active Northtown: Sporting City', was the key strategic document in the wider collaborative context of PE and sport in Northtown (Sport Northtown, 2002). The introduction to this strategy described it as the 'first partnership strategy for sport and active recreation' in Northtown (Sport Northtown, 2002, p1). Being a 'partnership strategy', the document was endorsed by a range of agencies including Education Northtown, the major professional sports clubs in the city, the local Primary Care Trusts and the voluntary sports federation in the city. However, the members of the advisory group who prepared the document were, in the main, from Northtown City Council and other public sector organisations including Sport England. Similarly, the Head of Sport commented that, as the core organisation responsible for sport, the local authority had provided a 'strategic lead' in the development of the strategy. Besides the Head of Sport, a number of individuals involved in NOPES programme were also members of the advisory group for the strategy including the PE Advisor from Education Northtown, and the Head of Sports Development from Northtown City Council. It is also of note that the strategy was written at a time when the initial plans for the NOPES portfolio were also being developed.

The Sport and Active Recreation Strategy had strong connections with the priorities of central government, the national context of sport (both as described in Chapter Two) and specific local issues within Northtown. In the local context, the strategy fitted into a hierarchy of plans from the Vision for Northtown (Northtown Initiative, 1999) through the Local Cultural Strategy

(Northtown Culture, 2002) to the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy. In terms of the sporting context, the strategy reflected the governmental agenda of valuing sport for its wider social benefits whilst recognising the intrinsic benefits of participation.

Reflecting the foci of the strategy, the balance between local and national priorities was an issue identified by interviewees. Both the Head of Sport and the officer from the external, national sports agency believed that national sporting agendas and programmes were effectively accommodated within the local authority and Education Northtown. However, despite understanding the importance of addressing national priorities, the Head of Sport also stressed that these had to be shaped according to the local priorities: ‘notwithstanding the national position, we’ve still got to be very clear about what we want to do locally’.

Within the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy, three of the six aims were particularly relevant to the context of PE, school and community sport (and the NOPES programme). Firstly, the strategy included an aim ‘prioritising young people - to increase the opportunities for sustained involvement of children and young people in sport and active recreation’ (Sport Northtown, 2002). Under this aim and of particular relevance to facility development, the strategy highlighted the

> *need to address under-investment in school sport facilities through a positive response to government funding initiatives. Bids for funding should be based on a strategic approach that, while responsive of individual school initiative, reflects school and community need across the city*
>
> (Sport Northtown, 2002, p27)

Furthermore, in the analysis of school sport, the strategy emphasised the need for greater collaboration between schools and between schools and clubs. In this regard there were very strong similarities with the NOPES

programme and central governmental strategies, such as the PE, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy.

More generally, the Head of Sports Development highlighted the combined contribution that NOPES and the School Sport Partnership programmes could make to the development of school sport in Northtown. Similarly, in Northtown, the NOPES programme 'came at a really opportune time because of the [national] investment in the school sport system' (Head of Sport) which also built on the school sport development work that previously had been undertaken by sports development staff. This longstanding involvement of sport development staff in school sport was credited by the Head of Sport as ensuring that local strategies for Sport and Active Recreation, PESSCL and physical activity were complementary.

A second aim in the strategy envisaged sport 'contributing to neighbourhood renewal' with a particular emphasis on 'prioritising areas of social deprivation' (Sport Northtown, 2002, p30). Furthermore, one of the Public Service Agreement targets in Northtown linked young people, sport and deprivation by aiming to increase the number of visits to sports centres by young people from the 12 most deprived wards in Northtown by 20 percent by 2005. All these aspects of neighbourhood renewal have similarities not only with the NOPES programme but also with policies of the Blair government.

The final aim of the strategy to be considered highlighted the sporting, and in particular physical, infrastructure in Northtown. As part of 'investing in people and places', the strategy stated an aim to 'ensure the availability of quality, accessible facilities' (Sport Northtown, 2002, p38). As with the focus on school facilities, the strategy again reiterated the need for a strategic approach to facility development. Furthermore, again linking to the NOPES programme, a target for '30 new or existing, school or community based sports and active recreation facilities to each have secured investment of £100,000 or more by 2006' was stated in the strategy (Sport Northtown, 2002, p40). This target emphasised the desire for locally based facilities, a

feature highlighted at a Northtown Physical Activity conference in 2000 (Sport Northtown, 2002). Interestingly, the target did not state the source of investment in these facilities.

Besides the links between NOPES and the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy, interviewees suggested that there was synergy between school sport programmes (including NOPES) and wider policy agendas concerning young people and education. In general, the Health Initiatives Team Leader believed that integration of a variety of strategies was

> *not hard really because once you get a sense of the big picture, you get a sense of the mutual support. If you treat them as separate, it is impossibly difficult.*

In particular, the national Every Child Matters policy and the Extended Schools programme were commonly mentioned by both sport- and education-focused interviewees as linking with NOPES and the school sport agenda. From an external perspective, the officer from a national sports agency believed that school sport in Northtown was in a good position to benefit from, and 'trail blaze' for, new ways of working within both the Every Child Matters policy and the Extended School programme. Specifically, a number of interviewees highlighted the potential of collaboration between NOPES projects and Extended Schools programmes to provide sporting opportunities for young people. Furthermore, the Head of Sport hoped that obesity would become a prominent issue within the Every Child Matters agenda in Northtown and commented that achievement of a 'step-change' in obesity levels was 'going to be the acid test whether this partnership stuff is actually worth it'. Connected with the previous, more general quote from the Health Initiatives Team Leader, this comment points to a focus in Northtown on partnership as a productive mechanism in achieving positive outcomes.

The emergence of the Every Child Matters policy and Extended Schools programme also influenced the re-organisation of sections within Education Northtown. This re-organisation resulted in the NOPES Portfolio Manager

becoming part of the Health Initiatives Team at a time when some NOPES facilities were close to opening. The inclusion of the Portfolio Manager in a team including the PE Advisor and the Active Schools Development Officer was described as aiding collaborative links between both individuals and different education- and health-based programmes. The fact that this re-organisation occurred when NOPES projects were undergoing a transition from construction to post-opening development (an issue covered in more detail in Section 6.3.3), a period when 'it is more about community development and partnership development' (Health Initiatives Team Leader), was regarded as particularly opportune.

Approaches to partnership and collaborative working

Evidence from a variety of sources pointed to a strong ethos of partnership working throughout organisations and agencies in the context of the NOPES programme. For example, the officer from the national, external sports agency commented that in Northtown there was 'an understanding of the benefits of working in partnership and there is a will to work in partnership'. Similarly, the co-ordination of resources through partnership working was one of nine principles underpinning the aims of the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy (Sport Northtown, 2002). In interviews, both the Head of Sport and the Health Initiatives Team Leader alluded to a slightly different conception of the purpose of partnership working. Rather than a focus on resources, or inputs, these interviews emphasised the role of partnerships in achieving outcomes. This point was succinctly made by the Head of Sport who stated 'partnership is a means to an end. You have got to focus on what is ultimately produced'.

Interviewees from both Northtown City Council and Education Northtown also identified what they understood to be the facilitative factors that allowed effective partnership working to occur in Northtown. The Head of Sport believed that staff within the Sport and Active Recreation department had skills and enthusiasm that encouraged others to work in partnership with them. These attributes, he believed, were those that had been developed

over a substantial period as sport had ‘always had to be on the coattails of other services’. Conversely, he also highlighted the ongoing need to develop these skills and partnership practices due to continuing changes in staff and the collaborative context.

Besides these individual factors, interviewees also stressed the positive influence of structural features in Northtown on partnership working. In general, the Health Initiatives Team Leader commented that partnership working had become ‘much more comfortable … over the last couple of years because it has become much more one understandable overarching pattern’. Similarly, a number of interviewees provided evidence that a formalisation of partnership structures in Northtown had contributed to this supportive collaborative context. For example, the Head of Sport suggested that the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy had helped ‘formalise a lot of the relationships that were already happening’ specifically in terms of specifying the roles of specific agencies. The structured nature of partnership in Northtown is a topic that will be returned to after a brief examination of the specific relationship between the two key agencies in the NOPES programme: the Sport and Active Recreation Section and Education Northtown.

The relationship between the Sport and Active Recreation Section and Education Northtown was representative of many of the more general features of partnership working identified above. Interviewees from each organisation commented on the positive relationships between the two agencies which had ‘grown up’ over an extended period of time. Interviewees highlighted the impact of individuals, agencies and structures in the development of effective partnership working. For example, the Health Initiatives Team Leader commented on the ‘good formal mechanisms’ that were in place between the two organisations which were ‘useful structures, not overly structured because personal contact is important’.

Interviewees also provided their views on the impact of the change from the Education Department being part of the local authority to an external

company limited by guarantee. For the Head of Sport, this change had not affected existing relationships to any great degree. However, he did recognise an increasing focus on health within Education Northtown, a feature that was positive for the agenda pursued by the Sport and Active Recreation Section. Conversely, the Health Initiatives Team Leader saw the change in the status and organisation of education as contributing to different relationships with departments that remained in the local authority. He commented:

> *I think it is changed. I think it is better because you are not so much taken for granted. You are seen as something more additional. More of a separate organisation and therefore adding value to … because they are separate it is treated slightly more formally. And that is quite handy at the high tables.*

Again this quote highlights, among other things, the benefits perceived by interviewees of having a degree of formalisation in partnership and collaborative working.

A key element of the formalisation of partnerships in Northtown that was prominent in the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy was the commitment to establish Sport Northtown, a network to 'oversee implementation, delivery and review' of the strategy itself (Sport Northtown, 2002, p42). The description of Sport Northtown in the strategy very strongly reflected the wider prevailing political context as well as representing an attempt by policy actors involved in sport in Northtown to respond to this context, as highlighted in the following excerpt:

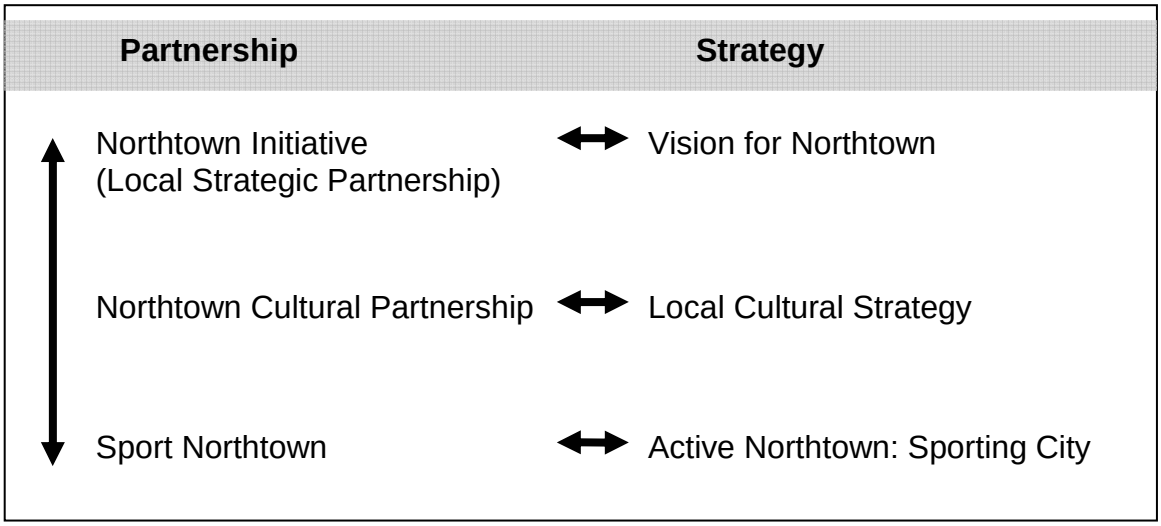
> *an increasingly strategic approach is being taken to the development of local areas most notably with the Government's requirement of local strategic partnerships and community strategies. Sport and Active Recreation should follow this model to both benefit from the joining up of effort this approach brings and to ensure the interests of*

sport and active recreation are represented within the emerging local partnership / strategy framework

(Sport Northtown, 2002, p42)

With the formation of Sport Northtown, the relationship between partnership groups and strategies in Northtown was as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Planning and Partnership Framework for Active Northtown



(Adapted from Sport Northtown, 2002, p8)

The Health Initiatives Team Leader provided an interesting insight into the move towards this structure, describing it as a

boiling down process whereby all the network groups who had a fairly wooly function are being lost and it has all been consolidated into the structure that you see through the [Northtown] Initiative.

This quote suggests that rather than Local Strategic Partnership structures in Northtown making for more complex governance relationships, it instead represented a consolidation of existing relationships.

Structurally Sport Northtown was presented in the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy as a loose network of a variety of agencies and

individuals. Its membership was open to ‘all organisations that support the Northtown Sport and Active Recreation Strategy and its principles’ (Northtown Initiative, undated). Although Sport Northtown was notionally open, this statement also emphasised the exclusion of stakeholders who did not share the norms and values of the core policy makers, a feature that is often identified in policy communities (Laffin, 1986).

Within the Sport Northtown network, a project board acted as the main partnership body. Replicating the wider Local Strategic Partnership, the board took its membership from a variety of different sectors of sports provision, including the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. However, the Head of Sport, who was a member of the project board, provided insight into the influence of the local authority within Sport Northtown

> *For all intents and purposes, it is the council that is driving [Sport Northtown] at the minute. It shouldn’t be. It should be a genuine strategic partnership. … That might start clarifying what the role of the council actually is then.*

Unlike the Health Initiatives Team Leader’s earlier comment regarding partnership structures, this comment suggests that the move to Local Strategic Partnership structures was not without complexities for the agencies involved, particularly the local authority.

As with the underlying reasons for its establishment, the envisaged role of Sport Northtown was also resonant of the new modes of governance described in Chapter Three. In the Sport and Active Recreation strategy, Sport Northtown was ‘to provide leadership and co-ordination for the development of sport and active recreation opportunities in Northtown’ (Sport Northtown, 2002, p43). Furthermore, the organisation was also designed to ‘lead but not control’ (Sport Northtown, 2002, p43) a statement that bears strong resemblance with the steering rather than rowing analogy used in the governance literature.

As with the involvement of the local authority, the Head of Sport also provided evidence that the practical enactment of roles by Sport Northtown was more complex than described in the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy. Reflecting a general criticism of partnerships, he commented that within Sport Northtown the 'actual mechanism of shared accountability and shared scrutiny isn't quite there yet'. Although the Head of Sport intimated that Sport Northtown had the potential to be 'the independent arbiter in the purest interests of sport', he believed that shared accountability was difficult when member organisations, rather than Sport Northtown, were individually responsible for particular targets set nationally. Conversely, the Head of Sport suggested that accountability to Sport Northtown for NOPES money was one reason why NOPES projects continued to receive support post-opening from agencies involved in the programme at portfolio-level.

Within the Sport Northtown framework, there were a number of sub-groups organised around particular tasks and agendas. One of these sub-groups was the PE and School Sport Strategic Forum that was set up in July 2003. The overall aim of the forum was to raise standards in PE and school sport, with an initial objective of establishing a PE and school sport strategy. Not only was the group to develop strategy, but its terms of reference indicated its role in both advocacy and attracting funds for school sport. Unlike the Sport Northtown board, members of the forum were drawn almost exclusively from public sector organisations, primarily Education Northtown and Northtown City Council. In fact, many of the specified members of the forum were also represented on the NOPES core client team, in particular the NOPES Portfolio Manager, the Head of Sports Development and Senior Community Sports Development Officer. Other members came from particular schools, the School Sports Partnership programme and Specialist Sports Colleges.

Another group relevant to NOPES was the Facility Task Group which had its terms of reference finalised in July 2004. The aims of the group concerned the strategic development of sport and active recreation facilities for both

performance and participation. Unlike the PE and School Sport Strategy Forum, the membership of the task group was drawn from a variety of different organisations including Northtown City Council departments, the private and voluntary sectors, NGBs and higher education. An interesting link with the Blair government was provided in the principles underpinning the group in that greatest importance was placed on 'the amount and quality of provision offered to the people of Northtown not who the providers are' (Northtown Initiative, 2004). Although the roles of a number of the members of the group were linked to capital investment and asset management, the only member with a direct link to the NOPES strategic structure was the Head of Sport.

6.3.2 Project Level

Abbott Primary School

In some ways, Abbott Primary School was located in an area that may not have readily supported wider collaborative working around the NOPES project. Firstly, there was a lack of voluntary sporting clubs in the locality. At the time when the facility opened, project staff anticipated that the revenue-funded Sports Development Officer would undertake the challenging task of instigating new clubs in the area.

Furthermore, other facility developments in the locality, subsequent to the initial conception of the project, were seen by project staff as creating difficulties in the collaborative context. For example, new free-access tennis courts, providing for an activity that could have been accommodated on the multi-use games area, had been built nearby. Furthermore, the uniqueness of the project in providing an outdoor floodlit facility had been negated by the construction of other similar facilities in the locality.

In the collaborative context, there was a range of professional human resources on which the project could draw. For example, the Community Sports Development Officer who sat on the project management group had

links with other local sports projects and staff. There were also links to Northtown programmes that provided coaches to support curricular PE and extra-curricular sport. However, at the time that the facility opened, the School Sport Partnership programme was not operational in the school. Interviewees believed that the School Sport Partnership would provide the project with substantial human and financial resources. By June 2006, the School Sport Partnership programme still was not embedded in the school.

Although there were issues external to Abbott Primary School that affected it, problems developing collaborative working at the project were more embedded within the school itself. As the Portfolio Manager described, it was school staff who were ultimately responsible for developing collaborative links in the local context. Close to opening of the facility, project interviewees suggested that this responsibility would almost solely be devolved to the revenue-funded Sports Development Officer.

However, approximately one year post-opening, portfolio interviewees suggested that wider collaborative links remained in their infancy or were stalled. A comment from the Portfolio Manager highlighted the lack of collaborative links and the underpinning reasons:

> *At the moment they are looking around, trying to find other people they can lean on for support, you know, partnership working. And they have got a lot to offer. They just don't know it. And they are doing a lot. They are just not speaking the speak.*

This comment highlights not only the exchange resources required for collaborative working but also suggests cultural aspects that enable engagement with others in the collaborative context.

Portfolio interviewees were still hopeful that collaborative links with the wider context would still be developed at the project. The Portfolio Manager suggested that the Extended Schools programme had the potential to provide an impetus for the school to develop links with external agencies:

> *Once they start understanding that [Extended Schools] agenda and opening their doors and different types of people coming in to deliver different types of activity rather than just the teachers … And I think that kind of ethos is slowly emerging in the schools and once that starts happening at places like [Abbott] Primary School they will celebrate the facilities that they have got.*

Again this quote highlights the potential of the NOPES facilities as a resource that could be used in collaborative working as well as the importance of a collaborative ethos to allow such work to be undertaken.

Babcock High School

Within Babcock High School, the NOPES project was located in a supportive school ethos where 'every bit of the school supports each other' in a 'holistic' approach (Head Teacher). As such, school staff were unable to 'unpick' the particular contributions of different strategies and programmes due to the high level of integration between them. Although the NOPES project linked with a variety of plans and programmes, there were particularly strong synergies with the Extended Schools and School Sport Partnerships programmes.

The link between NOPES and Extended Schools appeared to be fundamentally based on the similar aims of both programmes which were both concerned with providing services outwith the traditional school day. A practical example of the results of this link will be provided in Section 6.4.2. Links between NOPES and the School Sport Partnership programme were, to a greater extent, based on relationships between individuals within the school responsible for each programme. The importance of human resources to this link was commented on by the School Sport Co-ordinator who thought that the two programmes 'wouldn't have tied up as nicely without someone in that position [NOPES revenue-funded officer]'. In practice, the School Sport Co-ordinator was responsible for links with other

schools, which were described as good, and the Sports Development Officer was responsible for links with the local community.

Prior to NOPES, the school had ‘very good relationships with the community’ (Facilities Manager). The advent of the NOPES project and the employment of the Sports Development Officer enhanced the capacity of the school to expand and strengthen links with community and voluntary sector organisations. The outreach focus of the Sports Development Officer’s work in particular led to a large increase in the number of sports clubs accessing the school’s facilities. Evidence from school staff and a representative of a local sports club demonstrated that the strength of these links were based upon reciprocal communication, mutual benefit and a clear policy approach from the school to working with community organisations. Staff from the school were also working with Community Sports Development Officers in the area to develop a local community sports forum.

In the public sector, the collaborative context of the NOPES project was also supportive. The background of members of the management group enabled links with other public sector leisure providers to be developed. Such links allowed examples of effective practice developed by other providers to be incorporated into practice at the NOPES project. Other links were more mutually beneficial. For example, the school worked with a local leisure centre to ensure that programming at each site was complementary rather than competing.

Northtown Sailing Centre

In general, the wider collaborative context of Northtown Sailing Centre was supportive of the NOPES project. Due to a re-organisation shortly before the NOPES project opened, the Youth Service had joined the Sport and Active Recreation Section in being part of the Learning & Leisure Department. The fact that staff from both the sections were to be based at the NOPES facility was also anticipated to improve collaborative working. Furthermore,

members of the management group, as well as having links through departmental hierarchies with individuals involved in NOPES at portfolio-level, also had links into other forums such as the PE and School Sport Strategic Forum and the local Head Teachers forum.

To a greater extent than at the two school-based projects, links with the educational context were important for the project at Northtown Sailing Centre. At the time when the NOPES project was nearing completion, outdoor education provision in Northtown generally was going through a period of heightened profile and rebuilding after a number of years when activities had ceased due to health and safety considerations. Links between outdoor education and other local agencies had stagnated in this period and, therefore, the Portfolio Manager believed that recommencing such links initially required a change of focus by project staff. However, around the time that the NOPES facility opened, there were a number of positive developments in the education-based collaborative context of the project. In terms of human resources, project staff were enthusiastic about the appointment of a PE and Outdoor Activities Advisor in Education Northtown (a position that had been vacant for some time) and the roll out of School Sport Partnerships within the city. Other policy developments were also supportive of the project and these included the re-instatement of in-service training for teachers to become qualified to lead outdoor adventure activities.

Other links between the project and the wider collaborative context were more ad-hoc rather than being strategic developments. These types of links included:

- a coach being employed at the centre through the national Community Sport Coach programme to undertake on-site as well as outreach work
- the inclusion of water based activities in schools' Gifted and Talented programmes

- a further education college planning to use the project's facilities as part of their courses.

In terms of the community-based collaborative context, the project addressed two distinct communities: a city-wide community for outdoor activities and the local community in which the facility was located. Although there was enthusiasm amongst project staff for linking with these communities, there was little evidence of the development of such links prior to the opening of the NOPES facility.

6.4 NOPES Policy Process and Outputs

6.4.1 Initial Selection of Projects

The role of the original NOPES steering group was to decide how to progress the initiative within the city. This included a top-down appraisal of 'what we wanted to see in terms of adding value to the city' (Head of Sport) as well as building relationships with schools to gain a bottom-up appraisal of needs at a local level. The group had wanted an open selection process where potential projects submitted applications for consideration by the steering group. In fact the steering group felt that they 'could not go ahead other than by informing all of the schools of the programme and allowing them to submit proposals' (Corporate Initiatives Team Leader). The Head of Sports Development commented that, compared to making a purely top-down decision, a project-led application process 'made it very difficult for ourselves, but we did it the right way'. For the steering group, one of the benefits of an application-driven selection process was that it was seen as fair and transparent.

Each of the 300 schools in Northtown were given a short application form which asked for details of the proposed project and its estimated cost. For the city's NOPES allocation of £7.7 million, a total £30 million worth of bids were received from schools and other proposed projects. Demand for NOPES funding, therefore, far outstripped the available allocation.

To assess applications, criteria were developed that ‘balanced aspirations of schools with all of the issues that we [the steering group] knew, like the [the Fund] criteria’ (Head of Sports Development). Applications were assessed and discussed by the steering group. As formal criteria for assessing applications were very simple, the knowledge of people on the steering group was very important in selecting projects. For example, expert knowledge provided by Education Northtown’s Estate Management Team Leader was seen by interviewees as very important in assessing what facilities existed on school sites. Similarly, one reason behind applying for revenue funding as part of the NOPES portfolio was that members of the steering group ‘have had experience of the need for revenue alongside a capital programme’ (Corporate Initiatives Team Leader).

Furthermore, applications were examined as to ‘how they fitted strategically in terms of how we saw sports provision at a community level within the city’ (Head of Sports Development). As part of this process, potential projects were assessed as to how they would contribute to the city-wide Education Development Plan, Sport and Active Recreation Strategy and Regeneration Plan. A Director of the External Leisure Consultants also commented that NOPES ‘represents a fantastic opportunity to kick start elements of [School Sports Partnerships and Specialist Sports Colleges] programmes’ in Northtown. Linkages with other strategies were, therefore, mainly considered in terms of how NOPES could support other programmes achieve their outcomes.

Other factors that appeared to have influenced the selection of projects were the availability of partnership funding and local political support. This issue was directly related to the selection of the project located at Abbott Primary School. The Portfolio Manager described the possibility of £445,000 of partnership funding from a commercial factory located adjacent to the school as a ‘very attractive amount of money’. This interviewee also described how support for this project from local councillors, who saw it as a

potential catalyst for improving the community area, also influenced the selection process.

Once the steering group made an initial selection of projects, this decision was not only approved throughout the hierarchy of different council departments (up to council members) but also by a scrutiny panel made up of school Head Teachers and Governors. It was therefore evident that although the steering group was instrumental in the policy process, an effort was made to include a wide variety other stakeholders. However, stakeholders outside the steering group did not actually alter the original selection of projects made by the steering group. Similarly, the thoroughness of the selection process also allowed the steering group to justify the selection of projects and respond to grievances from projects not selected. Overall, interviewees felt that the 'strength of the decision making process is seen in the effective selection of projects which [still] fit into the wider context' (Portfolio Manager). The selection process was seen by key stakeholders as a model that could be used for future schemes of similar scale to NOPES.

Initially twelve projects (and nine reserves) were selected in four categories: outdoor 'multi-use' areas and pitch developments; new and refurbished indoor facilities; outdoor and adventure schemes; and small schemes. The five smaller schemes were located at a variety of sites including primary schools, a residential centre and community venues. There was also one project designed to provide playground markings at a number of primary schools sites. The remaining six projects, all of which were proposed to receive over £125,000 of NOPES funding, were based at four secondary schools, one primary school and Northtown Sailing Centre.

Subsequent to the selection of projects which were presented in the Stage 1 application to the Fund, a number of projects were dropped from the portfolio. These changes were required because of increases in the scale of some projects, increased construction costs throughout the portfolio and the impact of the Building Schools for the Future programme on some proposed

projects. Other than those projects that were dropped from the portfolio due to Building Schools for the Future, the priority assigned to projects in the Stage 1 application was the key factor in decisions as to which projects were no longer to receive NOPES funding. Projects were informed at the outset as to the priority order in the portfolio and the risks of projects not being funded. The process of projects being dropped from the portfolio was described as difficult for all concerned, particularly as staff from at least one project had contributed significant effort to the Stage 2 application process.

The final portfolio consisted of only five projects. Three of these projects were those included as embedded units within this case study, namely the artificial turf pitch at Babcock High School, the multi-use games area at Abbott Primary School and the Northtown Sailing Centre project. The project with the second largest NOPES award in the country, at £4 million, was also included in the portfolio. This award contributed to the replacement of parts of a previously run down sports centre with a new-build, dual-use facility that included a full-size artificial turf pitch, a sports hall, a six-court multi-use games area and a dance studio. Unfortunately, the extended application and construction period for this project precluded it from being included in this study. The primary school playground markings project completed the final portfolio. None of the small projects remained in the final portfolio. The Portfolio Manager believed that a politically fortunate aspect of the final portfolio was that the projects were located in different wedges throughout the city.

6.4.2 Application, Design and Construction Processes

After the selection of projects the Project Board had overall responsibility for the NOPES portfolio and as such ‘provided overall strategic direction and management’ (Head of Sports Development). The role of the group was mainly to approve and review recommendations received from other groups in the structure. For example, a decision to proceed with construction on one project without final approval from the Fund was ultimately taken by the Project Board. The Board also had a role in supporting the operation of

other groups and individuals within the structure, for example, providing knowledge on council procedures.

Beneath the Project Board, the Core Client Team was responsible for managing the entire NOPES process and making recommendations to the Project Board on key strategic decisions. Much of the work of the Core Client Team was described by the Portfolio Manager as being reactive in 'managing a very complex and changing process'. As such the group was responsible, amongst other things, for ensuring the Fund's requirements were met, developing briefs for the individual projects and making appropriate funding, procurement and administrative arrangements. The human resource implications of these procedures were commented on by the Capital Projects Manager: 'I think we all underestimated the amount of disruption perhaps and the amount of time in terms of management that it [design and construction] has actually cost a lot of people'.

Although not a major feature of this study, one aspect of the actual construction process is worthy of brief consideration. The appointment of a single contractor to construct all the projects was viewed as effective and valuable by interviewees. As in other aspects of NOPES in this case study, relationships and communication with the contractor were very important. As the Capital Projects Manager commented, 'the relationship we have had with the contractor has almost dragged us through a lot of these difficulties …I think it has more than paid for itself in terms of maintaining that level of communication.'

Similarly, the process of consultation and communication regarding the design and construction at individual projects is also of interest. In the design process, the Capital Projects Manager described the 'level of stakeholder consultation was almost to the n^{th} degree'. Whilst this process undoubtedly required substantial human resources, it provided a process of learning for staff within the case study. Subsequent school building projects

included consultation with a wider group of stakeholders than previously and more time was allowed prior to construction to accommodate this.

6.4.3 Post-opening of facilities

As outlined earlier, responsibility for development of NOPES facilities post-opening was substantially devolved to projects. Individual projects were responsible for the management, programming and operation of NOPES facilities. For school-based projects, these issues particularly related to opening facilities for community use. Although business and development plans were in place for projects, portfolio-level interviewees stated that addressing issues within these plans was challenging for projects. These challenges were particularly pertinent at school projects where there was little previous experience of requirements such as employment of non-school staff, generating income to cover costs and creating sinking funds. The Portfolio Manager suggested that the transition for projects once NOPES facilities had opened was ‘much harder than we ever thought’.

Despite the devolution of responsibility, there remained tools available at portfolio-level to steer and support the development of projects. However, there was variability as to the extent that these tools were utilised. As stated previously in this chapter, the Portfolio Manager was involved with projects after their facilities opened but to differing degrees dependent on the expertise and experience amongst individuals at each project. Furthermore, re-employing the external consultants across the whole portfolio to revise projects’ business and development plans appeared to be an attempt to steer projects in a direction consistent with portfolio aims. This analysis is supported by the Head of Sports Development’s description of these plans as a ‘framework [that is] set’ for projects and his comment that ‘hopefully there is enough in this process [of rewriting plans] that says it isn’t all guys coming to play five-a-side’.

Projects had different perspectives on the effectiveness of the input of the external leisure consultants. Staff at Babcock High School and Northtown

Sailing Centre both valued the added and specialised expertise that the consultants brought to the development planning process. However, despite there being a lack of such expertise at Abbott Primary School, the Chair of School Governors believed that the involvement of the leisure consultants in revising business and development plans 'probably won't help a great deal at the end of the day'.

Portfolio-level interviewees also suggested that there could have been a central system for the monitoring and evaluation of projects. Employment of monitoring and evaluation tools is often highlighted in the governmentality literature as a mechanism of central control and the Director of the leisure consultancy company stressed the need for projects to collect data that were consistent with local authority and Comprehensive Performance Assessment targets. However, due to a desire not to overburden projects, no portfolio-wide monitoring and evaluation system was put in place, a feature described by the Portfolio Manager as a 'weak link'.

The Portfolio Manager also identified that processes at particular projects were different due not only to the different contexts within which the projects were located but also to the different types of facility that had been built. The different policy processes at each project will now be considered in some detail.

Abbott Primary School

At Abbott Primary School prior to the opening of the NOPES facilities, there was uncertainty as to how their use, especially for the community, would be developed. Before the facility opened, there was evidence that staff at the project had little understanding of the content of the project's business and development plans and had not taken any ownership of these documents. This was a direct consequence of the previous Head Teacher, who had driven the NOPES application process, moving on. Current management group members also questioned the degree to which the plans reflected local issues. Linked to this issue was the fact that the context of the project

(for example the new facilities that had been built nearby) had changed since the time when they were initially written.

Furthermore, particular issues within the school context hindered the development of the project. At the time of conducting interviews, the new Head Teacher who had been in place for a number of weeks had limited time to devote to the NOPES project due to a forthcoming OFSTED inspection. The Portfolio Manager also suggested that the building process for the facility had ‘consumed’ individuals connected to the project.

There was also a level of uncertainty regarding the financial sustainability of the project in the longer term which was a consequence of the issues considered above. The project’s business plan included financial estimates but these were regarded by project staff as an unreliable guide with the Chair of Governors remarking that financial sustainability would be addressed ‘once we find out what future business we have got’. However, the Community Sports Development Officer questioned who would take the lead on revising these business plans.

Babcock High School

The vision for the project at Babcock High School was that the school would become the ‘hub of local sport’ (Facilities Manager). Given this vision, the focus of the community aspect of the project was on meeting local need and developing usage by local clubs that provided opportunities for young people. This focus was chosen in preference to the adoption of a more commercial approach to community use which would have entailed using the artificial turf pitch to generate maximum income. For this reason, a proposal from a commercial company running adult football leagues to utilise the pitch was rejected.

The local community focus was included in the original business and development plans for the project. As with Abbott Primary School, project staff recognised that aspects of the context of the project had changed

subsequent to the writing of these plans during the application process. However, upon the opening the facility, the plans were updated and were regarded as still having utility as a guide to the development of the project.

These plans considered the financial sustainability of the project in the longer term. A sinking fund was created in which annual contributions were to be made to cover the eventual replacement of the artificial turf surface. After the opening of the facility, contributions to this fund were increased from original expectations to £10,000 per annum. There was more uncertainty regarding the Sports Development Officer post once the two year revenue funding from the Big Lottery Fund ceased. However, the school displayed a commitment to retaining this post although to do so some facility rates would have to be increased to more commercial rates.

With respect to practical management procedures, the Sports Development Officer, together with the school's Facilities Manager, was responsible for the development of bookings procedures for community use of the school's sports facilities. Clear bookings policies were developed which were designed to be fair and accountable to all clubs wishing to use the facilities. These community bookings procedures, which were developed around the needs of users, subsequently led to changes to the system of school lettings used previously across the whole of Northtown. These booking procedures also provided monitoring and evaluation data for those staff involved in the management of the facility.

Although the role of the management group has been described earlier in this chapter, the contribution of links with the wider collaborative context on achieving the policy aims of the NOPES project is of significant interest. Community usage of the artificial turf pitch was close to capacity one year after it opened with the majority of this usage being from football clubs many of whom had transferred usage from the sports hall. This transference allowed a greater diversity of community activities in the sports hall. In total, one year after opening 33 more sports clubs used the facilities on the school site.

In the education context, a number of primary school festivals were organised on the artificial turf pitch through support provided by the School Sport Co-ordinator. This involvement of primary schools was seen by school staff as mutually beneficial with pupils becoming more familiar with the secondary school which they would attend whilst also developing better sports skills which supported the future delivery of the secondary PE curriculum.

Collaborative working also supported the development of holiday programmes. In partnership with the Extended Schools staff within the school and with funding from the Youth Service, staff connected to the NOPES project organised a significant summer programme for the first time in 2006. This programme attracted attendance by over 800 young people.

Northtown Sailing Centre

Prior to opening of the NOPES facility at Northtown Sailing Centre, project staff gave few indications of the potential policies, outputs and outcomes that the project would generate. In general, close to opening of the new facilities project staff believed that business and development plans, developed during the application process, had ‘to a large extent stood the test of time’ (Sports Development Officer for Outdoor Pursuits).

Within the education context, these plans sought to extend usage by primary schools in particular with a focus on local schools that were not taking up opportunities at the sailing centre at that time. Other school-based themes running through the plans were the extension of out-of-school hours activities and the delivery of training for school staff. The extension of out-of-school hours activities, in particular, required a more proactive, development role from centre staff rather than merely delivering booked sessions as had happened in the past.

A similar focus was present in the plans with regard to developing activities for the community. The development plans stated that prior to the NOPES facility being constructed there was ‘little community use’ which ‘tends to be limited to participation in leadership / training courses or adult education navigation courses’ (Northtown Sailing Centre Development Plan, 2003, p47). Plans to enhance this community use included developing a Saturday morning activities club for young people and developing a specific volunteers training course.

Planning regarding issues such as monitoring and evaluation and sustainability were fairly well developed prior to opening. At that time, there were plans for a management information system to be installed in the new facility. Project staff hoped that this system would provide sufficiently detailed information on users to impact on future programming for particular target groups. With regard to sustainability, the status of the facility as a local authority service ensured that it was the extent of provision rather than the service as a whole that was dependent on the income generated through the new facility.

Although data was unavailable from project staff post opening, portfolio-level interviewees highlighted a number of ongoing issues at the project. These interviewees suggested that changing practice and the thinking of staff had been a challenge at a project that represented a re-development of an existing facility rather than the provision of a new facility. Existing staff were expected to change working practices due to both the focus of the NOPES programme and specific aspects of the new facility. For example, the requirements of IT suite and the resultant need for new forms of collaboration were highlighted by the Head of Sports Development:

> *There is almost a process of restructuring the mind set and physically in terms of how you make use of the IT suite when that is not what we do. And that means we have to go out and engage in a different way.*

One other difference compared to the other school-based projects was highlighted by the Head of Sports Development. Where it was clear that responsibility was devolved to schools themselves at other projects, the position of this project managed within the Sport and Active Recreation Section was somewhat problematic. The Head of Sports Development commented that there were:

> *difficulties around communication, where we are almost managing but not controlling. The communication and decision making, although we have got representation on the project board, at a senior level it has made communication and decision making problematic.*

This quote suggests that, whereas schools automatically had devolved power and responsibility, this process was more difficult for a project completely within local authority structures.

6.5 Discussion and Conclusions

The concluding section to this chapter brings together the evidence presented from Northtown and begins to identify important issues with regard to topics addressed in the study's two key research questions: the form of partnerships and their effect on policy processes and outputs connected to the NOPES programme.

6.5.1 Partnership and collaborative forms

In the first instance, it is necessary to locate partnerships in the NOPES programme in the wider context of collaborative working in PE, school and community sport in Northtown. In general, the evidence showed that collaborative working in Northtown was based on the value it could bring to the achievement of desired, local outcomes. Collaborative working founded on shared outcomes enabled the integration of a variety of both national and local policies and programmes. In turn, these policies and programmes

provided resources that could be shared between partners and were used to achieve desired outcomes.

Besides the focus on achievement of shared outcomes, city-wide partnerships also often had a governance function. Documentary and interview data highlighted the roles of Sport Northtown, and sub-groups beneath it, in steering policy development, supporting co-ordination as well as providing scrutiny and accountability. The extent to which these partnerships were effectively fulfilling these roles is, to an extent, beyond the scope of this study. Although authors such as Lewis (2005) and Geddes (2006) have questioned the level of democratic accountability in partnerships, the different rationales for partnership in Northtown cover the range of those suggested in central government policy.

The strong commitment to collaborative working across Northtown was reflected in the centrality of partnerships in the NOPES programme at the portfolio-level. Portfolio-level partnerships for NOPES were based on, and grew out of, those in the wider context of PE, school and community sport. For example, in terms of partnership members, those individuals and agencies involved in NOPES were commonly those that were already working in partnership both informally and in formal settings. The continued and, sometimes intense, involvement of individuals in city-wide partnerships, both for NOPES and in the wider context, carried significant human resource costs. That these costs were met reflected the importance of, and resources dedicated to, PE, school and community sport within public sector organisations in Northtown.

Besides similarities of membership, aspects of the forms that NOPES partnerships took also reflected the wider collaborative context. In general, relationships between agencies involved in PE and sport in Northtown had undergone a process of formalisation that was attributed, to varying extents, to the advent of both the Local Strategic Partnership and Education Northtown. Particularly during the design and construction phase of the NOPES programme, the partnership structure designed to deliver NOPES

facilities was, similarly, highly formalised. However, NOPES partnerships in the initial phase of the programme and, especially, after facilities opened were less formalised. Thus NOPES partnerships changed through different phases of the programme, as identified by Lowdes & Skelcher (1998) in other funding programmes in which partnerships were seen as a key policy and delivery mechanism.

Beyond these structural issues, it is instructive to examine the involvement at NOPES portfolio-level of particular agencies and individuals. The involvement of private sector organisations in what has traditionally been seen as the public realm is a particular feature of the literature on new modes of governance (e.g. Pierre & Stoker, 2000) and is a feature worthy of comment in Northtown. Evidence from public sector employees highlighted the strengths of relationships with both the external leisure consultants, involved in planning for NOPES projects, and the construction company involved in the building of NOPES facilities. The relationship between the local authority and the external leisure company, in particular, was an ongoing one developed through the company being contracted to undertake a number of pieces of work for the local authority. In both cases, these relationships were credited by portfolio-level interviewees as bringing significant benefits to the NOPES programme.

Perhaps the key individual in partnerships throughout the NOPES programme in Northtown was the Portfolio Manager. The role of the Portfolio Manager was comparable with individuals in the partnership literature termed as ‘reticulists’ and ‘boundary spanners’ who may support, enhance and lead collaboration between different agencies (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002; Ranade & Hudson, 2003). In this case, the Portfolio Manager supported not only partnership working in particular groups within the NOPES structure, but also provided a conduit for communication horizontally between different groups at portfolio-level within the structure and vertically between portfolio level and individual projects.

In a similar vein at project level, individuals played a key role in facilitating or inhibiting collaborative working. For example, the NOPES revenue-funded Sports Development Officer at Babcock High School played a valuable role in developing links not only between staff employed in a variety of roles within the school but also between the school and local community organisations. Conversely, at Abbott Primary School and Northtown Sailing Centre initial difficulties in developing collaborative links were attributed to key individuals leaving these organisations.

Besides the presence, or otherwise, of particular individuals, other factors affected collaborative working at the three projects. Linked to the individuals involved in the organisations, it was clear that partnership working represented a new way of working for staff at Abbott Primary School and Northtown Sailing Centre. Again, Babcock High School provided an alternative example with there being evidence of a collaborative ethos existing before the advent of the NOPES project. In turn, the prior existence of collaborative relationships, as Huxham & Vangen (2005) suggest, made collaboration with regards to the NOPES facility less challenging at Babcock High School.

Furthermore, the availability of resources within the organisations that hosted NOPES projects affected their ability to work in partnership. Prior to the Sports Development Officer and School Sport Co-ordinator being appointed at Abbott Primary School, it was apparent that a scarcity of additional human resources within the school inhibited attempts to forge links with other organisations. Moreover, NOPES facilities themselves were a capital resource that could be utilised in collaborative working. It could, however, be hypothesised that the limited nature of the multi-use games area at Abbott Primary School and the availability of other facilities in the locality diminished the facility's value as a resource and, thus, made collaboration less attractive to other agencies. External to the school itself, a final factor that inhibited collaborative working at Abbott Primary School was contextual with there being a lack of sports clubs in the locality.

The factors identified above led to different forms of partnership and collaborative working at the three projects. Each project had formal partnership groups which were located in the overall NOPES structure in Northtown and included officers within the hierarchical departmental structures of members of portfolio-level groups. However, the different features of projects and their contexts (described above) contributed to differences between these partnership groups. For example, while the partnership group at Babcock High School had a clear role, and had involved members from outside the school in the group to fulfil that role, challenges in partnership working meant that the roles of partnership groups at the other two projects were initially unclear. Similarly, while there were informal links between Babcock High School and community organisations from the outset, such links were again less well developed at the other two projects.

6.5.2 Effect of Partnership and Collaboration on Policy Process and Outputs

Initially, the NOPES steering group took a governance role in collectively making the key policy decision regarding
which NOPES projects to select. As the membership and form of the NOPES steering group resembled partnerships in the wider collaborative context, so the NOPES policy process was based on existing policy, expertise and previous experience from other sporting programmes in Northtown. In particular, it was unsurprising given these features, that the selection process fitted with the approach to facility development described in the Sport and Active Recreation Strategy, that of balancing a strategic focus with the local needs of schools. The composition of the final NOPES portfolio reflected these two concerns with the majority of large, strategically-located projects balanced by an umbrella project that provided smaller-scale playground improvements for a large number of schools. A final comment on the selection process regards the processes enacted to provide a level of accountability for the decisions taken. It is notable that these processes were enacted both within the hierarchical structures of the local authority

and Education Northtown as well as a wider network of schools and other organisations.

The process of design and construction of NOPES facilities represented the enactment of these initial policy decisions. The complexity of design and construction processes across a number of different projects affected the form of partnership at this stage, requiring a level of formalisation as to the roles and responsibility of different individuals and groups. Besides the management of design and construction processes, there was also a degree of portfolio-level steering of the operational development of individual projects. It is interesting that the external leisure company was tasked with undertaking one aspect of steering through its role in the formation and subsequent updating of projects' business and development plans. Similarly, the support offered to projects through the portfolio manager and officers within the organisational hierarchies of other portfolio group members could be identified as a form of steering. These steering mechanisms were all notable for being supportive and process-based rather than being directive and output / outcome-based as requirements for monitoring and evaluation could have been.

Although there was some degree of central steering of projects, a substantial degree of responsibility was devolved to individual projects, particularly at Babcock High School where portfolio-level stakeholders had a high degree of confidence that desired outcomes could be delivered. Evidence from all the projects examined, but particularly from Babcock High School, demonstrated the close relationship between collaboration and the achievement of desired outcomes. For example, the development of links with community groups was viewed both as a mechanism to develop use of the new facility and as an desired outcome in itself, as expressed well by the Head of Sports Development when talking about collaboration at the Babcock High School project:

> *I think that is one of the biggest sports development outcomes. What are the resources in the community? How best can they be shared?*

And certainly having staff who are dedicated to that priority outcome has been a help in a major way.

The decision to include local voluntary sector members on the project management group at Babcock High School can also be seen in a similar way. In one sense, the inclusion of these members directly contributed to the school's aim of becoming the 'hub of local sport' whilst also, interviewees believed, enabling the group to be more effective in developing policies and practices to achieve this aim in the longer-term.

The examples of Abbott Primary School and Northtown Sailing Centre provide similar, yet contrasting, examples of the issues identified at Babcock High School. It was recognised at Northtown Sailing Centre that the achievement of desired outcomes in both the education and community contexts required the organisation to adopt a more pro-active, outward-looking approach which would facilitate collaboration. A similar analysis could be applied to Abbott Primary School. However, evidence at both these projects suggested there were challenges in adopting such an approach, among them the associated need to change working practices and the potential loss of control for the host organisations.

Chapter Seven: Midcity Case Study

7.1 Introduction

Midcity is a city with a population of approximately 280,000 based in the East Midlands. In 2001, statistics showed that Midcity had areas of significant deprivation with 19 of the 28 wards in the city in the 20 percent most deprived wards in the country. The city was culturally diverse with over 35 percent of school pupils speaking English as an additional language.

Midcity became a unitary authority in 1997. After 1997, there were a number of changes in the council administration. Labour had overall control of the council until the 2003 elections. After these elections, and responding to the Labour government's modernisation agenda, a cabinet structure was adopted by the council. Due to the change in the balance of parties at this election, initially the Liberal Democrats formed an administration, with the backing of the Conservatives. However, this administration collapsed in November 2004, and was replaced by a minority Labour administration. This administration in turn collapsed in 2005, and was replaced by the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives once more.

Concomitant with these changes of administration, there were a number of reorganisations to the departmental structure of the local authority. These changes included the departments that were connected to PE and sport in Midcity. Over the period of this study, mergers and reorganisations led the Education Department to become, firstly, the Education & Lifelong Learning Department followed by the Children's Services Department. Similarly, as a result of a merger, the Cultural Services Department which encompassed the Sports Services Division became the Culture & Regeneration Department.

The structure for this chapter is the same as that for the previous chapter on Northtown. The first section of the chapter will focus on partnerships directly

involved in the New Opportunities for PE and Sport (NOPES) programme in Midcity. Following this, the collaborative context of the NOPES portfolio will be examined in the second section. Subsequently, the third section will discuss NOPES policy processes and outputs. Finally, an initial discussion of the key themes from the Midcity case study will be provided.

In each of these sections distinctions will be made between issues identified at portfolio level and at individual projects. In Midcity, five individual NOPES projects have been studied. These five projects are:

- A new sports hall at Cameron Community College which was located in a multi-cultural, multi-deprived area. This project was funded through NOPES fast-track[8] funding of £668,276. The school provided additional funding of £360,000 for the new facility.
- A new artificial turf pitch located at Dalgarno Community College, a secondary school based in an inner-city area with a high proportion of ethnic minority residents. The project received NOPES funding of £348,000.
- A similar artificial turf pitch located at Eddington High School which received NOPES funding of £509,000.
- A new four-court sports hall with fitness suite and changing facilities attached to an existing swimming pool next to Fairhurst College. NOPES funding of £1.3million was granted to the project with the school and Midcity City Council providing £300,000 of partnership funding.
- A new four-court tennis centre located between two schools, Gaffey Boys School and Hatfield Girls School. NOPES contributed £1.05million to the project with the Lawn Tennis Association providing £390,000 of partnership funding.

[8] A number of fast-track projects were advanced by the New Opportunities Fund to progress ahead of the majority of projects in order to provide early examples of effective practice and learning.

7.2 Partnerships in the NOPES Initiative

7.2.1 Portfolio Level

In Midcity, the Education & Lifelong Learning Department was designated as the lead department for the NOPES programme. As such, the Director of Education was chair of the strategic steering group created for the NOPES programme in the city. This steering group consisted of a variety of members from the local authority and other public sector organisations. Besides the Education & Lifelong Learning Department, other local authority departments and divisions represented on the steering group were Property Services, Sports Services and Housing. Representatives from outwith the local authority included the police, a local racial equality and sport project and an Education Facilities Development Manager from a local sport and education project (more information will be given on this project in Section 7.3.1).

The strategic steering group had two main roles during the time period covered by this study. Firstly, the group made the strategic decisions required for the NOPES programme in Midcity and had delegated powers from elected members to sign off on these decisions. The group also had an accountability role to ensure that directors of relevant local authority departments knew of, and could query, the ongoing progress of the NOPES portfolio. Some of the group's members believed that it had facilitated continued progress in the NOPES portfolio despite changes in the Midcity City Council's administration. The continuity provided by key local authority officers who sat on the steering group was also identified as being important to the ongoing progression of the NOPES programme.

Within the steering group there was a core group of members who were central to the NOPES programme in Midcity from its inception. Two of these core members were the PE & Sport Strategic Manager (located within the Standards and Effectiveness Division of the Education & Lifelong Learning Department) and the Head of Sport from the Regeneration & Culture

Department. Together, these two individuals provided the initial impetus and 'core vision' for the NOPES programme in Midcity. Their different roles within the Midcity City Council ensured that different aspects were addressed within the NOPES portfolio. For example, the Head of Sport ensured that issues regarding community use and wider sport strategy were considered alongside educational needs in the initial development of the NOPES portfolio.

Some other members of the steering group appeared peripheral and in fact ceased to remain involved as the NOPES portfolio developed. The comment by the PE & Sport Strategic Manager that the steering group included 'all the partners that we were asked to engage by the New Opportunities Fund' was suggestive of their inclusion to meet an assessment requirement rather than the strategic steering group being an inclusive, integrated partnership. Some of these members provided marginal input into the process by which NOPES projects were selected in Midcity but their particular expertise was not relevant when the projects began to be constructed. As some members discontinued their involvement with the steering group, the steering group became 'a representation of those areas that need[ed] to be on it' (PE & Sport Strategic Manager).

One key individual in this reduced strategic steering group was the Education Facilities Development Officer who acted as the Portfolio Manager for Midcity (as well as for two other local authorities encompassed by the sport and education project that employed him). During the NOPES application and build process, the Education Facilities Development Officer was responsible for operational decisions on a day to day basis. On the construction side, a Project Manager within the local authority's Commercial Services Department was important in managing the design and construction process. The Education Facilities Development Officer stated that there was clarity in Midcity as to the level at which particular decisions had to be made and welcomed the continued input of the steering group in authorising key strategic decisions.

The Education Facilities Development Officer's input into particular projects diminished when construction of facilities was completed. Although not strategically planned from the outset, portfolio-level interviewees believed that NOPES revenue-funded officers would become key personnel in providing expertise and support to projects post-opening. Experience from the Space for Sports and Arts programme within Midcity had demonstrated the need for revenue officers to provide this type of service. Two revenue-funded officers were to be employed in the Children's Services Department: one focusing on mainstream sports activities delivered by the majority of NOPES projects and the other with a specific remit for outdoor education. However, possibly due to the lack of strategic thinking about these posts from the outset, three NOPES projects were open for some time before these officers were appointed. As a result, the PE & Sport Project Officer from the sport and education project suggested that these officers would have 'catching up to do' when they came into post.

7.2.2 Project Level

Before examining the different partnership and management arrangements at each NOPES project, two issues raised by key stakeholders at portfolio level are of interest. Firstly, prior to building NOPES facilities, the Head of Sport believed that a common weakness across schools was a lack of expertise and experience in managing sports facilities. Secondly, portfolio-level interviewees had an expectation that each NOPES project would have its own partnership group to manage the new facility. In practice, evidence suggested that there were significant differences between projects in the partnership and management arrangements enacted. These different arrangements will be described in the following subsections.

Cameron Community College

When construction of the NOPES facility at Cameron Community College was completed, a new post of Community Sport Co-ordinator was created within the school. The role of the Community Sport Co-ordinator was to

manage and develop usage of the NOPES facility. The post was initially funded through the school budget although there was an aspiration that income from the NOPES facility would cover the salary costs in the longer term. The school's Business Manager was the immediate line manager for the Community Sports Officer.

Shortly after the facility opened the Community Sports Co-ordinator established a management committee for the project. The committee included representatives from:

- the school's PE department
- the school's senior management team
- a local Sports Action Zone
- a local Positive Futures project
- a local community association.

When initially inviting potential members onto the committee, the school's Head Teacher identified a tension between being inclusive of all potential stakeholders in the project and not creating a large, unwieldy committee that delayed decision making. The role of the committee was initially described as providing a forum for development of sport for the local community.

Dalgarno Community College and Eddington High School

Arrangements for the management of artificial turf pitch projects at Dalgarno Community College and Eddington High School were very similar and so will be considered together. There were no formal partnerships connected to NOPES projects at both of these schools. For each project, an informal coalition of each school's Business Manager and PE staff managed the usage and operation of the artificial turf pitches. Staff from each PE department were largely responsible for usage in curricular and extra-curricular time with each school's Business Manager having primary responsibility for usage beyond the school day.

There was little prospect of management groups for these projects being set up. Commonly, interviewees from both projects questioned the need for any formal management group and did not believe that such a group would serve a useful purpose. The only interviewee to dissent from this view was the Head of PE at Dalgarno Community College who hoped that a School Sports Council that previously was in place would be reformed to allow community representatives a role in the development of all sports facilities at the school.

Fairhurst College

Partnership and management arrangements for the NOPES project at Fairhurst College were different from those at the other projects. The overall management of the new sports hall and fitness suite at this project was undertaken by the Sports Services Division within the local authority Culture & Regeneration Department. Sports Services also managed an existing swimming pool adjacent to the NOPES facility. Management of the project by Sports Services ensured that the project utilised, and fitted into, existing structures and systems in place for the management of local authority leisure centres across Midcity.

A Service Level Agreement between the school and the Culture & Regeneration Department was in place to formalise the management arrangements for the project (Midcity City Council, 2006a). Included in this agreement was provision for a management committee to oversee all aspects of the management and development of the facility. Initially, members of this committee were:

- a Deputy Head Teacher from the school
- the school's Head of PE
- a Project Officer from the Sports Services Division
- the incoming Facility Manager from the Sports Services Division
- the Midcity NOPES Portfolio Manager.

Interviewees from both the school and the Sports Services Division believed that there was a good working relationship between the two organisations. For example, the school's Deputy Head Teacher stated that the management committee was underpinned by 'a commitment from all sides to make the partnership work'. The Portfolio Manager had played an important role in developing this working relationship by acting as an independent broker between school and Sports Services staff.

Comments from portfolio-level interviewees regarding the partnership arrangements at this project were also revealing. The PE & Sport Strategic Manager believed that 'we may have inadvertently hit upon something that is very positive' in creating a link between facility resources available within schools and the management expertise that existed within Sports Services. This sentiment was echoed by the Head of Sport who believed that if the partnership was successful, it could encourage similar arrangements to be developed elsewhere in Midcity.

Gaffey Boys & Hatfield Girls Schools

Of the five projects studied in Midcity, the project located between Gaffey Boys and Hatfield Girls Schools was the most complex in terms of partnership. Besides the two schools, other key stakeholders in the project were the County Lawn Tennis Association (CLTA) and Midcity City Council itself. Unsurprisingly, given their adjacent locations, there was evidence of strong historical links between the two schools. Interviewees from Gaffey Boys School and the CLTA also described working in partnership from the late 1990s. With regard to this relationship and the NOPES project, the County Tennis Development Officer commented 'we were building on a track record and willingness to work together'.

Prior to submitting the Stage 2 application for the NOPES project, a project development group was set up comprising representatives of each of the stakeholders identified in the previous paragraph. Subsequently, approximately six months before construction of the facility was completed,

a formal management group was set up for the project. Although the management group was based upon the same representatives and organisations as the project development group, the interviewees from Gaffey Boys School and the CLTA suggested that the inclusion of the Chair of Governors of both schools as the chair of the management group was a significant addition. This individual was described as providing leadership for the project as well as adding a level of business expertise to the group.

Despite the existence of these groups, there were difficulties in partnership working at the project. The PE & Sport Strategic Manager commented that the project caused:

> *angst for all partners. And that means we have done something wrong. The process has not been as good as it should have been. So how you establish those partners and manage the expectations of partners from the outset is crucial.*

Specifically, the Deputy Head Teacher of Gaffey Boys School suggested that the initial project development group lacked authority and decision making power. As a result, members of the group undertook all of the tasks required in the application for, and development of, the project rather than these being delegated by the group to others within their respective organisations. Although interviewees from Gaffey Boys School and the CLTA believed that these problems were addressed with the instigation of the management group, the delay in doing so led to problems developing policies for the management and development of the project. These problems will be further examined in Section 7.4.2.

From the perspective of the Deputy Head Teacher of Gaffey Boys School and the County Tennis Development Officer, the involvement of Midcity City Council staff in the project was also problematic. Partnership funding from Midcity City Council was withdrawn prior to the submission of the Stage 2 application. The Deputy Head Teacher commented that, despite this withdrawal of funding, Midcity City Council ‘wanted to [remain] involved and

be a stakeholder and that did pose some conflict within the management group'. One example of this conflict was the opposition of Midcity City Council to the inclusion of a fitness suite in the facility which was attributed (by the Deputy Head Teacher) to the existence of similar facilities in a nearby Sports Services-operated leisure centre. The same interviewees from Gaffey Boys School and the CLTA also suggested that the variety and turnover of Midcity City Council personnel involved with the project was also problematic, in particular causing 'mixed messages' due to communication difficulties.

7.3 The Collaborative Context of the NOPES Programme

7.3.1 Portfolio Level

Educational Context

Given the prominent position of the Education & Lifelong Learning Department in the NOPES programme in Midcity, understanding the context of the department is important for this study. The department was mainly focused on raising educational standards within underperforming schools. The 1998 OFSTED report identified 14 schools with serious weaknesses and 14 schools requiring special measures (OFSTED, 1998). By 2001, when the NOPES programme commenced, one school remained in special measures while seven remained with serious weaknesses. Another important facet was the numerous changes in officers who held senior positions in the department during the period covered by this study.

There was mixed evidence from external interviewees as to the importance placed on PE and sport within the Education & Lifelong Learning Department. A representative from a national PE and sport organisation suggested that the department had been 'supportive' of the national agenda for development of PE and school sport. Conversely, another interviewee believed that, rather than focusing on PE for its own sake and for the alternative learning environment it could provide, the Education & Lifelong

Learning Department was exclusively focused on grades at GCSE level. The PE & Sport Strategic Manager was the key individual in developing PE and school sport within the department. The fact that this officer was part of the Standards & Effectiveness Division provided an indication that the role was expected to have an impact on standards.

There were a number of other education-based initiatives and programmes that were linked with the NOPES portfolio in Midcity. The PE & Sport Strategic Manager oversaw the development of the School Sport Partnership programme in Midcity. There were two School Sport Partnerships in Midcity which worked closely together and encompassed all the schools in the city. Further information on links between individual NOPES projects and the School Sport Partnership programme will be given in following subsections.

In the early stages of the NOPES programme, a number of interviewees believed that there would be synergy between NOPES projects and the Extended Schools programme. Both programmes were viewed as having the potential to contribute to an aim within the Education & Lifelong Learning Department that schools were to become a hub for their local communities and should be about ‘more than education’ (PE & Sport Strategic Manager). However, evidence from projects and a subsequent interview with the PE & Sport Strategic Manager suggested that links between these two programmes did not progress as quickly had initially been hoped.

There was also evidence of difficulties linking the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme with NOPES and wider community sport objectives in general. There was initial difficulty linking the applications for BSF and NOPES programmes as there were different national timescales for each. Staff at individual projects were also unsure how new long-term arrangements for operating school buildings after BSF would affect community use of NOPES facilities. More generally, the Head of Sport and PE & Sport Strategic Manager suggested that the designs for new school

sports facilities funded through BSF focused primarily on curriculum use rather than including provision for community use beyond the school day.

Sporting Context

Beyond the education context, there was similarly mixed evidence regarding the profile that sport had within the local authority. In December 2004, the Head of Sport commented:

> *my job is to get sport as high a profile in the city as possible. That is very difficult within a unitary authority where education and social services take priority.*

Prior to this time, budgets for sport had been reduced in order to increase funding for education and social services (Best Value Inspection Service, 2001). Subsequent interviews provided evidence of sport becoming a higher priority for Midcity City Council. Both the Sports Regeneration Officer and the Sports Services Manager from the Sports Services Division commented that sport was increasingly valued for its contribution to other agendas within Midcity. The inclusion of the 'culture block' in the local authority's Comprehensive Performance Assessment targets also supported the increasing status of sport. Furthermore, a city-wide public consultation carried out by the Culture & Regeneration Department also enhanced the political position of sport within the department. However, there was evidence that some elected council members exerted influence to orientate sports policy in Midcity towards particular areas or issues. For example, it was suggested that the leader of the Labour group in the council ensured that a leisure centre in his ward was not closed.

Within Midcity City Council, the Sports Services Division was responsible for both facility and sports development provision. The evidence suggested that, particularly in the early period covered by this study, facility provision was a higher priority than sports development services. The first comprehensive Sports Strategy for Midcity (covering the period 2001 to

2006) certainly featured the provision of facilities prominently (Midcity City Council, 2001). Furthermore, policies in the strategy aimed at increasing participation amongst particular target groups involved improving access to facilities rather than provision of any sports development-related programmes. The local authority operated eleven sports facilities in Midcity encompassing both indoor and outdoor provision.

Although initially a secondary partner to facility provision, there was evidence of sports development services being increasingly accepted as an important part of the Sports Services Division. This was highlighted in the second Sports Strategy (covering 2006 to 2008) that gave a higher profile to using particular programmes in order to reach target groups (Midcity City Council, 2006b). The Head of Sport also described a move from provision solely within sports centres to a variety of locations within the city, a change that fitted with the school-based nature of the NOPES programme. Furthermore, the increasing focus on utilising sport as a tool to achieve wider social outcomes in Midcity, combined with these outcomes being included in Comprehensive Performance Assessment targets, led to the reorganisation of sports development staff. Roles of each officer within the Sports Regeneration Unit (as it became termed) became focused on a particular target group or area, for example young people or people from a black or ethnic minority background.

There was evidence that the increasing focus of the Sports Services Division on achieving wider social outcomes was both driven by, and indicative of, its budget limitations and the higher priority of other local authority services. Interviewee and documentary data emphasised that staff within Sports Services were ‘constantly looking to make use of external funding opportunities, both revenue and capital’ (Midcity City Council, 2006b, p16). In turn there was a recognition that ‘sport on its own can’t go and argue the case. We have to go through backdoors’ to demonstrate the potential of sport to impact on issues such as educational attainment, crime and health (Sports Services Manager). This reliance on external funding contributed to an imbalance in relationships with external agencies

demonstrated by the Sports Services Manager who commented ‘we are in a position where we include them in our strategies but we haven’t quite made it into [other agencies strategies]’.

The impact of this externally-focused alignment of Sports Services was more apparent on sports development than on facility provision. The Sports Regeneration Officer described how the focus of many sports development programmes were ‘driven by funding’ received from external agencies. Internally, budgetary concerns also affected staff who managed sports facilities. The Sports Services Manager described how facility management was driven by the need to adopt a business-like approach in order to maximise income generation.

The issues described in the preceding paragraphs in turn affected how the Sports Services Division worked collaboratively with other local authority departments and public sector agencies. The relationships between the Education & Lifelong Learning Department, Sports Services and other key agencies connected to the NOPES programme will be the focus of the remainder of this section.

Relationships in the Collaborative Context

Interviewees provided substantial evidence on the relationship between the local authority departments directly concerned with sport and education. Historically, top-level relations between the Education & Lifelong Learning and Cultural Services Departments were poor. The Head of Sport commented that there was ‘a long way to go in terms of directors working together’ although he described their first meeting (in 2004) as a ‘red letter day’. Subsequently, the PE & Sport Strategic Manager believed that having targets that the two departments were jointly responsible for had helped develop the relationship between them. One example of a target that was shared by the two departments was the national objective of 75% of pupils taking part in 2 hours of high quality PE and school sport per week.

The initial creation of the post of PE & Sport Strategic Manager was initially seen by the Head of Sport as an avenue to better relationships with the Education & Lifelong Learning Department. As such, Sports Services initially contributed one third of the post's salary costs. In itself, this was somewhat remarkable given the respective sizes of the Sports Services and Education & Lifelong Learning budgets. However, the Head of Sport saw this as an investment to gain a 'foothold' in the Education & Lifelong Learning Department and believed that this contribution had been repaid 'in benefits that must be a hundred times worth in terms of what you are putting in cash wise'. This comment reinforces the evidence provided earlier of the financial, resource-based approach developed by the Sports Services Division to working in partnership with other agencies in the public sector. It is also interesting to note that staff from the external sport and education project also claimed some credit for enabling the PE & Sport Strategic Manager post to be created.

By their own account, there was a strong personal relationship between the Head of Sport and the PE & Sport Strategic Manager that was based upon a shared vision for PE, sport and physical activity. By the time of the initial development of the NOPES programme, these two officers had 'built a level of trust where that trust cannot be broken' (Head of Sport). The strong relationship between the Head of Sport and PE & Sport Strategic Manager, and their shared vision, was described by both as being important to the development of the NOPES programme in Midcity.

Despite the strength of this relationship, it was evident that wider departmental issues still affected the two individuals. For example, recognition of input into the building of new facilities was an issue. The Head of Sport suggested that when facilities were built in or near schools, there had been a tendency to credit the Education & Lifelong Learning Department rather than recognising the role of Sports Services staff. Given this tension, it was interesting that the 2006 Sports Strategy, written by Sports Services staff, claimed that 'developing and completing a range of building developments in local schools supported by money from the Big

Lottery Fund' was a major sporting achievement (Midcity City Council, 2006b, p1). The 2004-05 annual review for the external sport and education project also described the construction of NOPES projects as a 'highlight' (Midcity-shire District Council, 2005). Neither of these documents recognised the other agencies that were involved in the NOPES programme.

Beneath this strategic level, there was evidence of effective and improving operational links between staff in the Sports Services Division and school personnel involved in PE and sport. From the perspective of the Sports Regeneration Officer, links had improved significantly since the advent of School Sports Partnerships due to the additional human resources, such as Partnership Development Managers and School Sports Co-ordinators, available within the Education & Lifelong Learning Department. The Sports Services Manager described the Sports Services Division as being 'lucky' that some links existed with schools prior to large scale investment in education-based programmes such as NOPES and School Sport Partnerships.

Besides the Education & Lifelong Learning Department, collaborative links between the Sports Services Division and public health agencies were developing and increasing in importance throughout the duration of the study. After a considerable period of time trying to create links with health agencies, the Head of Sport, by 2006, was a member of a number of joint strategic groups including the Public Health Partnership Executive Board. Both the Head of Sport and the Sports Services Manager credited the creation of links with health agencies, and their increasing importance to Sports Services, with the ready availability of evidence demonstrating the benefits of participation in sport to health. As a result of this, one interviewee suggested that agencies involved in health were replacing those in education as the key partners for the Sports Services Division.

Despite their improvement, it was apparent that relationships between sport and health agencies remained imbalanced. The Sports Regeneration Officer

described the process of linking with health agencies as ‘like in some ways having to sell your product’ to show ‘what role sport can play in relation to ... their overall aim or their targets’. As with the more general approach to links with other agencies described earlier, one benefit for the Sports Services Division of this link was the proposal that the local Primary Care Trust would fund a new post managed by the Head of Sport aimed at reducing obesity.

Besides Education & Lifelong Learning, Sport Services and health agencies, another key organisation connected to the NOPES programme was the external sport and education project. The project was formed in 1997 with partnership funding from Midcity City Council, two other neighbouring local education authorities and the English Sports Council (later to be renamed Sport England). The purpose of the project was twofold: to provide a joint vision for education-based sporting provision across the three local education authorities and to deliver programmes that addressed aspects of this strategic vision. Initially jointly hosted by the three local education authorities, the project became part of the local County Sports Partnership when it was formed in 2004.

Linking with the NOPES programme, a major responsibility for staff employed by the project was school sport facility development. This work was mainly undertaken by the Education Facilities Development Officer who, as part of this role, acted as the NOPES Portfolio Manager in Midcity. When the project was first set up, the role of this officer was to encourage and support schools to open their sport facilities for community use. Over time, however, the officer’s role changed to one of attracting and managing external funding delivered through programmes such as NOPES.

Evidence provided by the project’s manager (the PE and Sport Project Officer) reinforces the analysis of the approach of Midcity City Council to PE, sport and physical activity presented earlier in this section. In general, the PE and Sport Project Officer believed that there was a lack of strategic leadership from Midcity City Council elected members and senior officers for PE and school sport. Indicative of this issue was that, unlike the other two

local education authorities, no elected members from Midcity were involved in the project's systems of governance. The PE & Sport Project Officer also thought that these issues were exacerbated by a lack of continuity amongst Midcity's elected members, the local authority administration and its senior officers.

From the PE & Sport Project Officer's perspective, specific difficulties in the relationship between the project and Midcity were rooted in shifting expectations and difficulties in recognising each partner's input. The changing role of the Education Facilities Development Officer (described earlier) was one example of the project having to reallocate human resources dependent on new opportunities available to the local education authorities. The PE & Sport Project Officer also suggested that 'the difficulty has always been, more and more, focusing on what [Midcity] is getting out' of the project in return for its contribution of funding. As a result, the project's annual reviews from 2003 included a breakdown of benefits by local authority and, from 2005, an estimation of the financial value-added to each local education authority by the project (Midcity-shire County Council, 2003, 2004, 2005). This aspect fits with the wider theme identified earlier of sport-based collaborative work in Midcity being based upon exchange of financial resources.

Due to its representation on the NOPES steering group, the final agency in the collaborative context of the NOPES programme to be considered in this section is a local racial equality and sport project. This five year project was set up in Midcity in 2001 by Sport England. Project staff, including the Project Manager, were employed through Midcity Racial Equality Council, a voluntary-sector organisation. The project addressed supply-side aspects of racial equality in sport by working to change the policies, practices and procedures of agencies in Midcity, in particular those of the local authority. Moreover, the focus of the project fitted with the ongoing development of sport policy within Midcity by advocating a more proactive approach by agencies to encouraging participation in sport by people from a black and ethnic minority background.

In general, the Project Manager described a ‘fantastic working relationship’ with Midcity City Council. Formally, the presence of the Head of Sport and the PE & Sport Strategic Manager on the project’s strategic board provided links with both the Education & Lifelong Learning Department and the Sports Services Division. However, as the Project Manager spent 14 years working within the Sports Services Division, informal relationships were the key to, what was viewed as, effective collaborative working. The Project Manager also described the mutual benefits to the project and Sports Services that derived from this relationship. However, with collaborative working and networks developed by the project being dependent on one individual, the Project Manager was concerned that in the longer-term these arrangements remained ‘fragile’. At the end of the project in 2006, the Project Manager left to take up the post of Sports Development Manager (Equity) within the local County Sports Partnership.

7.3.2 Project Level

Although the collaborative context of particular NOPES projects will be considered in the following subsections, data from interviews with officers from the Sports Services Division regarding their links with NOPES projects in general provide an interesting initial insight. The following discussion primarily relates to the NOPES projects at Cameron Community College, Dalgarno Community College and Eddington High School.

There was evidence of a competitive relationship between NOPES facilities and other leisure facilities operated by Sports Services. In a competitive environment, the Sports Services Manager recognised strengths of both NOPES and Sports Services facilities. The Sports Services Manager believed that, while NOPES projects were able to set lower usage charges, facilities operated by Sports Services offered higher standards of service to customers. A comment by the Head of Sport further demonstrated this competitive relationship but also emphasised the overall power relationship between NOPES projects and Sports Services:

The amount of money involved with NOPES was so small [that] they are going to have an inestimable [small] effect on my sports provision in the city … Since you've opened [NOPES facilities] my attendances have shot through the roof by 90%. I'm doing really well thanks.'

Barriers to collaborative working between a number of NOPES projects and the Sports Regeneration Unit were also described. The Sport Regeneration Officer identified factors affecting potential collaborative work as the type of NOPES facility available, the location of the project and the target group that the Sports Regeneration Unit wished to work with. Minor issues such as identifying an individual at the project for officers from the Sport Regeneration Unit to work with also affected the potential for collaborative work. However, the largest barrier described by the Sports Regeneration Officer was the requirement for NOPES projects to generate income:

But there is still that thing that they will charge us [for use of the facility]. Where they can't see that partnership link. Well not so much can't see it, because I think they can see it, but again they are driven by revenue. There are constraints all the time.

The collaborative context of each particular project will now be considered. It is worthwhile to note that the following subsections are mainly based on the perspective of school staff.

Cameron Community College

Prior to NOPES, within the wider educational context, Cameron Community College had a tradition of working with local primary schools. The NOPES project, consisting of a new sports hall, helped to extend and develop these links by allowing primary schools to access the new sports hall.

In the community context, the NOPES project was the catalyst for the development of links with a variety of sport-based agencies. Developing

these links was a major, early task for the school's Community Sport Co-ordinator. However, the Community Sport Co-ordinator described developing these links as time consuming which often meant that she felt 'pulled in all angles'. Operational issues regarding the NOPES facility were also often more pressing in the early stages after opening of the NOPES facility.

The capacity to develop links in the community context was also constrained by the construction of a major new Sports Services-operated leisure centre in the vicinity of the school. Rather than there being a level of co-ordination between the two facilities, it appeared that competition with the leisure centre forced school staff to narrow the community focus of the NOPES project. Regulations within Midcity City Council ensured that the NOPES project could not compete with the leisure facility on price and, therefore, the Community Sports Co-ordinator decided to focus on developing links with basketball, badminton and disability organisations. Due to this focus, the project benefited from additional support from the Disability Sports Regeneration Officer. Interviewees from Sports Services suggested that the support from the Disability Sports Development Officer was dependent on the direct link with the Community Sport Co-ordinator. As a result, the support offered by the Disability Sports Development Officer was of a scale not available to other schools with sports and NOPES facilities.

Other links with community and sport-based agencies were in their infancy when interviews were conducted at the school. The school was located in a Sports Action Zone and research conducted for that programme was initially useful for the Community Sports Co-ordinator. Due to the focus of the project, the Community Sports Co-ordinator also managed to encourage usage of the facility by disabled, junior and senior basketball clubs.

Dalgarno Community College

For staff at Dalgarno Community College, the School Sport Partnership programme was described as ‘central’ to the success of the NOPES project. Through the School Sport Partnership programme, there were existing links with primary schools which the NOPES project could contribute to. However, within the local community, there was a scarcity of sports clubs that the school could link with. The school’s Head of PE believed that, without additional human resources, expanding links with local community organisations would be difficult.

As with Cameron Community College, there was a competitive rather than collaborative relationship with other Midcity City Council leisure facilities. The Head of PE described the NOPES project as being ‘at a disadvantage’ in a competition for community users with other artificial turf pitches operated by Midcity City Council whom, it was alleged, offered discounts to particular groups. Furthermore, the Sports Services Division focused activities in the area on a local youth centre and the school initially received no support post-opening from officers from the Sports Regeneration Unit. The school received some support to run activities on the NOPES artificial turf pitch from football and hockey development officers employed by agencies outwith Midcity City Council. Staff at the school were aware of a local forum instigated by the racial equality and sport project. However, involvement with this forum appeared to be minimal and not connected to the NOPES project.

Eddington High School

At Eddington High School issues regarding the collaborative context of the NOPES project were similar to those at Cameron, and to a greater extent, Dalgarno Community Colleges. In particular, the NOPES project fitted well with the general development of school sport both within the high school and its feeder primary schools. Soon after the opening of the NOPES facility, links with other schools had ‘massively improved’ (School Sport Co-

ordinator). School staff were also committed to developing strong links with sports clubs. In particular, staff were interested in developing a long-term relationship with a local hockey club who used the new artificial turf pitch that was funded through NOPES. The club had suggested that dugouts would be beneficial to their use of the pitch and the school were keen to provide these to promote a ‘sense of ownership’ within the club. Overall, the School Sport Co-ordinator suggested that NOPES provided the physical resource that allowed the school’s staff to develop these links.

However, as at Cameron and Dalgarno Community Colleges, the school’s Business Manager expressed concern that the pitch was in a context where it was ‘competing for the same clients as leisure centres, local sports facilities and other schools’. Although school staff would have welcomed any input or support, there was no contact with officers from the Sports Regeneration Unit.

In the slightly longer term, the school was due to be rebuilt through the BSF programme. The rebuild had the potential to enhance the NOPES project although the BSF programme also caused uncertainty about the management of the NOPES facility in the future. New indoor sports facilities were to be included in the new school which, together with the NOPES facility, were anticipated to form a ‘complete package’ which would enable the school to become ‘a true extended school’ (Business Manager). However, as part of the BSF programme, an external contractor was to manage and operate all the school’s premises including the artificial turf pitch. At the time of interview, the school’s Business Manager was unsure as to how community use of the NOPES facility would be managed once this new arrangement was in place.

Fairhurst College

The educational context of Fairhurst College was similar to the three other schools considered thus far in this section. Close to the opening of the NOPES facility, school staff had generally been attempting to work more collaboratively with feeder primary schools. Use of the NOPES facility was anticipated to enhance the work that was undertaken with these primary schools.

The new facility also allowed the school to access other school-based programmes and resources. The Head of PE believed that 'having the new facility will allow us to take part in lots and lots of things that we would not have been able to take part in before'. However, this interviewee also recognised that the potential to access other programmes was constrained by the time available to school PE staff.

Where there was most difference between the NOPES project at Fairhurst College and the three schools considered previously was in the closer relationship with local authority sports policies and programmes. This closer relationship was due to the management of the NOPES facility by the Sports Services Division. As such, city-wide programmes, including those operated by the Sports Regeneration Unit, were to be rolled out in the NOPES facility. The Sports Regeneration Officer explained how the management of the facility by Sports Services facilitated the involvement of the Sports Regeneration Unit:

> *Because it is linked straight into us, there is a much better link with regards to putting on activities for them. There is not a charge attached to it or anything … the closer it is to us obviously the easier it is to utilise that facility.*

Gaffey Boys & Hatfield Girls Schools

The NOPES project at Gaffey Boys and Hatfield Girls Schools fitted with strategic plans of the organisations with a stake in the project. Both the 2001 Sports Strategy for Midcity and the county tennis strategy identified a need to build an indoor tennis centre in Midcity although the initial location proposed for the centre was a Midcity City Council-operated recreation ground (Midcity City Council, 2001). As a Sports College, Gaffey Boys School had previously identified tennis as a focus sport and used funding gained through Sports College status to employ a full-time tennis coach. Prior to NOPES, the school had six outdoor tennis courts and the advent of the NOPES project 'fitted with our plans and the school were very keen to go to the next stage' (Deputy Head Teacher, Gaffey Boys School). The combination of indoor and outdoor tennis courts was seen by interviewees as creating a '10 court tennis centre'. For Hatfield Girls School, the NOPES facilities addressed a prior lack of indoor sports facilities.

Besides the links with strategic plans, a number of other facets of the collaborative context were supportive of the project. Initial plans for the project were underpinned by the recognition that 'there was demand from the local area … and we knew of that demand and we had success in the area of tennis already' (Deputy Head Teacher, Gaffey Boys School). To build on what may have been latent demand, a one-day event was held during the Stage 2 application process to ensure a wide variety of individuals and organisations could input into the initial plans for the project. By the time the project opened, this demand had begun to be realised with four clubs from Midcity expected to link in and benefit from the indoor provision available.

Reflecting the inclusion of the project in the CLTA strategy, the facility was also expected to become a 'focal point' for tennis programmes within the county. Through the CLTA, a variety of regional coach education programmes, tournaments and performance squads were going to be based at the NOPES tennis centre. The tennis coach from Gaffey Boys School

also believed that the integration of a number of different programmes within the tennis centre would also enable improved networking between individual tennis coaches working throughout the county. It is interesting to note that, in general, these collaborative links encompassed a wider geographical area than for other projects due to the fact that only one other indoor tennis centre existed in the county.

The project was also expected to contribute to, and benefit from, education-based programmes. For example, the tennis coach suggested that links with primary schools were important in developing an effective player pathway utilising all of Gaffey Boys School's tennis facilities. Programmes based in Gaffey Boys School for young offenders and in the summer holidays were also expected to utilise the facility once open.

7.4 NOPES Policy Process and Outputs

7.4.1 Initial Selection of Projects

The process of making decisions on the projects to be funded through NOPES was based upon a 'core vision' developed by the PE & Sport Strategic Manager and the Head of Sport. Part of this vision was to address the poor quality of school sport facilities prior to NOPES which interviewees stated was recognised in school OFSTED reports. The vision for the NOPES programme also placed community use of NOPES facilities on an 'equal footing' to school need (Head of Sport).

Although there was a core vision for the NOPES portfolio, the initial input into the selection process was requested from schools who were asked to submit bids for funding from the overall allocation of almost £5 million granted by the Fund for Midcity. Schools were required to submit bids to the steering group through their school development group (seven of which existed in Midcity). There was a stipulation by the steering group that these bids were not to exceed £1 million.

To underpin the assessment of these bids, a ‘matrix of need’ was developed jointly by the Head of Sport and the PE & Sport Strategic Manager. The matrix prioritised projects based at schools that had Sportsmark status, had a high proportion of pupils receiving free school meals, were located in areas of deprivation, had partnership funding available and were fully involved in the School Sport Partnership programme. In developing the matrix, the criteria developed for the Space for Sports and Arts programme were used as a baseline and adapted to meet the requirements of the NOPES programme. Working together, the Head of Sport and the PE & Sport Strategic Manager used this matrix in their initial, joint assessment of potential projects.

Beyond the matrix criteria, it was clear that the subjective knowledge, expertise and strategic priorities of the Head of Sport and the PE & Sport Strategic Manager were of prime importance in the selection of projects. The relative importance of the matrix criteria and the subjective decision making process were highlighted by the PE & Sport Strategic Manager: ‘if they ticked all those boxes, we would then consider the project’. The matrix criteria were, therefore, merely a threshold which projects were initially required to meet in order to merit further consideration.

For those potential projects that met the matrix criteria threshold, the degree to which they matched the two key officers’ strategic vision for the NOPES programme was instrumental in the subsequent selection process. Some projects that had fulfilled the matrix criteria were rejected ‘straight away because strategically [they] just didn’t make sense’ (PE & Sport Strategic Manager). In general, the strategic vision for the NOPES programme was one that was informally shared between the Head of Sport and the PE & Sport Strategic Manager rather than being documented in, for example, the Sports Strategy for Midcity (2001). Although the new sports hall at Cameron Community College and the tennis centre were amongst the previously planned facility developments outlined in the Sports Strategy (2001), the development of the two artificial turf pitches were not included in this document. However, the Head of Sport personally identified that there was a

lack of artificial turf pitches in Midcity. Both the causes, and the implications, of the lack of a strong, documented facility strategy were identified by the PE & Sport Strategic Manager:

> *I think we missed the boat. We were given the opportunity to think strategically about sports provision in cities, schools and the community and we weren't able to fulfil that because we physically did not have the infrastructure to do that, the type of capacity to do that.*

As well as the reasons given in the quote above, the problems linking NOPES into wider strategies were also attributed to the timescales for Stage 1 application provided by the New Opportunities Fund.

The PE & Sport Strategic Manager and the Head of Sport also described other factors that influenced their decisions on projects to be funded. Fitting with the general approach to prioritising external funding, the PE & Sport Strategic Manager stated that a deliberate effort was made to encourage other external agencies to contribute additional partnership funding to NOPES projects. The addition of funding from other agencies, for example the Lawn Tennis Association, was initially expected to add an extra £3 million to the £5 million NOPES funding allocated to Midcity.

Once an initial selection of projects had been made by the PE & Sport Strategic Manager and the Head of Sport, the resultant NOPES portfolio was then passed to the Director of Education for confirmation. A consultation process with Head Teachers was subsequently undertaken, and although it didn't alter the original selections, it did give Head Teachers the opportunity to identify and comment on key issues and voice their concerns. However, this post-selection consultation appeared to be a somewhat superficial process. The Head of Sport commented that 'it would have taken something unforeseen to make us change our minds'. Furthermore, both key officers who had undertaken the initial selection

believed that they were better placed than school Head Teachers to see the 'bigger picture' regarding PE and sport.

In total seven projects were chosen to be included in Midcity's original NOPES portfolio, one of which was the Fast Track project at Cameron Community College. All projects were located at secondary schools (with the exception of an outdoor pursuits project) and all had large-scale NOPES funding of over £440,000. In the context of the NOPES programme across the UK, the small number of large projects was in itself suggestive of a top-down decision making process (Lindsey, 2006). All bar one of the projects had partnership funding from other agencies and in three cases this partnership funding was a significant proportion of the total costs. The facilities chosen were two new large sports halls, an extension to an existing school sports hall, two new artificial turf pitches, a new indoor tennis centre and refurbishments to an outdoor pursuits centre. However, with Midcity City Council unable to fulfil its partnership funding commitments to the tennis centre project, the sports hall extension project was subsequently dropped from the portfolio with funding for this project reallocated to the tennis centre.

The existence of a Fast Track project is also of particular interest. The proposed project was included in the 2001 Sport Strategy and previous applications for the facility were rejected by other external funding bodies. As such, the project was ready to progress through the NOPES application process at an advanced pace. This project was the first major capital development of sports facilities for some time in Midcity. As a result of this, the PE & Sport Strategic Manager reported that the successful construction of the Fast Track project had given Midcity City Council confidence that the Head of Sport and PE & Sport Strategic Manager working together could deliver large capital projects and had 'raised the profile of us and the project'. This is an example of the potential of 'successful outcomes to reinforce the trusting attitudes that underpin more substantive collaborative activity' (Tett, Crowther & O'Hara, 2003, p47).

7.4.2 Application, Design and Construction Processes

After the initial selection of projects, the main objective for key stakeholders in the NOPES portfolio was to get facilities constructed. Rather than the strategic decision making undertaken during the initial selection of projects, this phase of the NOPES programme was dominated by managerial and operational processes. As such the Head of Sport and PE & Sport Strategic Manager took a less active role and a greater range of lower-level stakeholders became involved in the implementation of NOPES policy.

Most of the responsibility for management tasks enacted through this phase was transferred to the Education Facilities Development Officer who acted as the Portfolio Manager. This officer was responsible for liaising between the Fund and individual projects as well as fulfilling administrative requirements of the NOPES programme. Responsibility for completing Stage 2 applications was devolved to individual schools and projects, although the Education Facilities Development Officer provided significant support to project staff to overcome their inexperience in writing such funding bids.

Despite this support from the Education Facilities Development Officer, writing the Stage 2 applications was an onerous task for school staff. Officers managed by the Head of Sport also provided support and expertise for the writing of project Business and Development Plans required in the Stage 2 application. Given the focus of the Sports Services Division, it is interesting to note that the Head of Sport found it worthwhile to comment that this support had been provided ‘free of charge’. Dalgarno Community College also employed an external consultant to write the required Business and Development Plans.

Evidence of consultation with a variety of stakeholders was also required in each projects’ Stage 2 application. A number of interviewees described weaknesses in this consultation process which were attributed to the timescales and level of detail required by the Fund. At particular projects,

the Education Facilities Development Officer described ‘lip service’ being paid to consultation and the Stage 2 application process being a ‘tick box exercise’. Only at Fairhurst College, where Sports Services were involved to a greater extent, was there evidence that design aspects of the facility were changed as a result of consultation with community stakeholders.

Construction of NOPES facilities was managed by a Project Manager within the Commercial Services Department of the local authority. This Project Manager provided expertise in technical aspects of facility design and construction that other key stakeholders in the NOPES programme in Midcity did not possess. As a result, the PE & Sport Strategic Manager described the use of NOPES development funding to enable a dedicated Project Manager to be assigned to the NOPES portfolio as a critical decision. However, some project staff were concerned about a lack of communication with the Project Manager during the construction process which resulted in problems with the facilities that were eventually constructed. Furthermore, with the tennis centre project in particular, interviewees identified problems due to the lack of prior experience, within both Midcity City Council and the external construction company, of designing and constructing indoor tennis facilities.

7.4.3 Post-opening of facilities

After the opening of facilities, responsibility for the management and development of projects was almost entirely devolved to the individual schools and other organisations involved at project level. The key portfolio-level stakeholders had limited involvement with projects once they opened. For the Education Facilities Development Officer, this was primarily due to a lack of time to undertake such tasks.

In the initial stages of the NOPES programme, portfolio-level stakeholders were keen that schools took ownership of projects by understanding the financial risk in operating sports facilities. Once projects had begun to open, interviewees at all levels were aware of the financial implications of NOPES

facilities. Portfolio-level interviewees commented that predictions of income and expenditure included in Business Plans written at the time of Stage 2 applications were of little value when facilities opened over two years later.

A number of interviewees believed that the requirement that projects generated income to cover costs hindered attempts by project staff to target particular groups or address wider social outcomes. Furthermore, the PE & Sport Strategic Manager suggested that some projects that lacked specific human resources also faced difficulties in developing targeted programmes. As a result, the Head of Sport suggested that a number of the projects took the 'easiest route' by allowing clubs to block book the NOPES facilities.

The following subsections will consider how these and other issues affected policy at individual projects.

Cameron Community College

Upon taking up the position, the Community Sports Co-ordinator at Cameron Community College wrote a new 'Sports Hall Plan' to replace the outdated Business and Development Plans. The plan was focused on eight objectives that were mainly developmental and required the input of human resources. For example, the first objective was to:

> *Provide a sports programme aimed at encouraging all students, staff and local community members to participate in regular exercise and competition.*
>
> (Cameron Community College, 2003)

The wording of this objective suggested that there was to be a proactive, rather than reactive, approach to the development of the project. Similarly, the Sports Hall Plan also included an aspiration to target particular groups through provision of different types of activities, alterations to pricing structures and programming of activities.

Rather than delivering these plans and developing programmes, the work of the Community Sports Co-ordinator was initially focused on resolving operational issues such as health and safety requirements, recruiting and inducting staff and taking facility bookings. Financial implications of the NOPES facility were also apparent shortly after it opened. School staff expected, and required, that the NOPES facility would generate sufficient revenue to not only cover costs connected with opening the facility to the community but also, after one year, to cover the salary of the Community Sport Co-ordinator. The challenge of the project becoming self-financing was increased by issues such as the requirement to benchmark charges against other Midcity City Council facilities, unanticipated costs required to ensure that facility itself was fit for use and its location in an area of significant deprivation. One result of these issues was that the Community Sports Co-ordinator was initially disappointed by the level of use of the facility by members of the local community (as opposed to, for example, clubs from other localities).

Subsequently, there was evidence of more developmental programmes being delivered in the facility. As mentioned previously, through support and funding from the Disability Sports Regeneration Officer, holiday and extra curricular programmes were run for young people with a disability. However, the Sports Regeneration Officer commented that continued links with the project were difficult due to the post of Community Sports Co-ordinator being discontinued after the original postholder left.

Dalgarno Community College

When the NOPES project was originally conceived, staff at Dalgarno Community College viewed it as primarily benefiting PE and school sport. The Head of PE suggested that it was only at a later stage of application that the requirement for community use of facilities became fully apparent. The fact that responsibility for writing Business and Development Plans for the project was outsourced to an external consultant may be taken both as a sign of the low priority given to community use and also the lack of human

resources within the school. These plans were largely redundant once the facility opened and the main concern of school staff was that the income generated from community use covered the school's increased expenditure in providing access to the facility beyond the school day. Any other development of the project was driven by the Head of PE who had 'clear ideas as to what I would like to see happen'. These ideas were, as anticipated at the inception of the project, focused on school sport both within Dalgarno Community College and beyond.

The involvement of the racial equality and sport project in policy development for the project at Dalgarno Community College also provided an interesting insight into partnership working. The racial equality and sport Project Manager described how he, as part of his role on the portfolio steering group, initially queried the extent that people from black and ethnic minorities would be encouraged to access the artificial turf pitch beyond the school day. As a result, the Project Manager claimed, the school was required to provide more detail on how this group would be targeted. However, upon opening, there was little evidence of the school actively targeting people from black and ethnic minorities to use the pitch. By this point, the input of the Project Manager had reduced throughout the construction phases of the NOPES programme and, due to the lack of further funding, the racial equality and sport project had in fact come to an end. When questioned about this, the Project Manager recognised that the school would have required further external support and resources after opening in order to effectively target any particular group.

Eddington High School

The Business Manager in place at Eddington High School when the NOPES facility opened was not employed when Business and Development Plans for the project were written during the application process. Upon opening, the Business Manager described these plans as 'not relevant' and, in fact, suggested that they had been based on those written for Dalgarno Community College which existed in a 'completely different context'.

Usage of the artificial turf pitch during the school day was driven by the School Sport Co-ordinator. Beyond regular PE lessons, the pitch was used for activities linked to the School Sport Partnership programme such as hosting festivals for feeder primary schools. The School Sport Co-ordinator suggested that plans that would be written for the future development of the School Sport Partnership programme in the school would include the artificial turf pitch to a large extent.

Beyond the school day, the school's Business Manager drove the development of community use. While generating sufficient income to cover the long-term costs of the facility was a concern for the Business Manager, there was a more developmental focus to community usage than at Dalgarno Community College. The Business Manager wanted to encourage club, rather than casual, use of the facility. He was prepared to accept a loss on this type of usage initially in order to benefit from the longer-term commitment to the project that he perceived that clubs would have. In particular, there was an aspiration to encourage hockey clubs to use the facility as this could involve Asian participants from the local community. As well as recognising the need for increased participation amongst such groups, the School Sport Co-ordinator also demonstrated a degree of self-interest in such actions as she believed 'that's where the [government] money is'.

Fairhurst College

Due to the management of the NOPES facility at Fairhurst College by the Sports Services Division, financial and development planning for this project was markedly different from the three projects described previously. Financially, the Head of Sport anticipated that the facility would make a profit given that it was in an area with no competing facilities. The Service Level Agreement for the project specified that the school would take any profit generated from usage of the sports hall (Midcity City Council, 2006a). The Head of Sport believed that this financial arrangement would ensure the

continuation of the partnership between the Sports Services and the school in the longer-term ‘because the sweeter that we can keep the school, the happier they are to let us continue to run the facility’.

With regard to school usage, one of the main aims included in the Service Level Agreement was to ‘increase and improve the quality of sporting opportunities for the pupils, students and affiliated societies and groups’ (Midcity City Council, 2006a). The school had sole use of the sports hall during the school day and priority access until 6pm on weekdays. The school’s Head of PE also suggested that the improved relationship developed between the school and the Sports Services Division would enable pupils to access the swimming pool (operated by Sports Services) which was located adjacent to the NOPES facility. This had not previously been possible.

Beyond the school, an aim for the project was to ‘to provide additional opportunities for local people and sports organisations to participate in sport and develop their skills, particularly among low participant individuals and groups’ (Midcity City Council, 2006a). As the project was located in an area with several low participant groups, Sports Services staff recognised and appreciated the facility’s potential contribution to a number of Comprehensive Performance Assessment targets that they were expected to address across the city. The Service Level Agreement suggested that sports development programmes were to be instigated at the facility to target a variety of such groups including ethnic minorities and people aged over 50. Other community usage of the facility was to be a balance between club and casual use.

Gaffey & Hatfield Schools

At the time the project was due to open a number of major policy decisions regarding the management and operation of the tennis centre remained unconfirmed. Principally, a proposal to set up a company limited by guarantee to manage and operate the facility was still being negotiated

when the facility opened. Connected to this fundamental issue, there was also a lack of clarity as to where financial responsibility for the project rested. Due to delays in opening, the project was expected to make a significant loss in the first year. With both schools and the CLTA adamant that they would not cover this loss, negotiations were underway between the schools' Chair of Governors and high-level Midcity City Council officers to address the issue. Moreover, in the longer-term, the need for the project to be financially self-sustaining was expected to significantly constrain policy decisions regarding the use of the facility.

The lack of clarity in these management and operation issues were attributed by interviewees to the absence of a formal management group until the last few months before the facility opened. Another consequence of the lack of finalised management and operational arrangements was that programming the usage of the facility had not been fully addressed when it was due to open. Although the use of the facility during the day by both schools was agreed at the time of interviews, developing finalised proposals for programming beyond the school day was left to the incoming Centre Manager. These programming proposals were expected to enable participation by a wide profile of users of varying standards as well as address target groups of the CLTA and both schools.

7.5 Discussion and Conclusions

As in the last chapter, key themes from the Midcity case study will be drawn together in this concluding section. Again, these themes will be structured according to the study's two key research questions regarding the form of partnerships and their effect on policy processes and outputs connected to the NOPES programme.

7.5.1 Partnership and collaborative forms

Forms of partnership developed for the NOPES programme in Midcity strongly reflected the wider collaborative context. In Midcity, the PE & Sport Strategic Manager and the Head of Sport had strategic responsibility for school and community sport respectively. As such, these two local authority officers together formed the core of the strategic steering group that initially developed the NOPES programme. The specific roles of these two officers reflected the dual focus of the NOPES programme on school (inclusive of PE) and community sport. In their respective areas, the PE & Sport Strategic Manager and the Head of Sport brought sufficient resources, in terms of expertise and authority, to enact the initial policy decisions made co-operatively between them regarding the NOPES portfolio.

The sufficiency of these resources contributed to the marginalisation of other members of the strategic steering group. It could also be hypothesised that the strong and long-term bond between the PE & Sport Strategic Manager and the Head of Sport may have created a norm of partnership working, similar to the 'normative order' identified by Laffin (1986) in policy communities, that excluded other members of the strategic steering group. The tokenistic involvement of other members of the strategic steering group suggested that, despite its investment of funding, the Fund lacked the power to change existing forms of collaboration at a strategic level.

Understanding the basis for wider collaborative working in Midcity is important in examining other relationships and partnerships in the NOPES programme. For the Sports Services Division, in particular, relationships with other agencies were built on an approach where financial resources were acquired in return for a contribution to achieving objectives of these other agencies. Such exchange relationships are typical of market modes of co-ordination and governance (Powell, 1991). Due to the balance of resources between, for example, sport and health and the lack of consistent priority given to PE and sport within Midcity City Council, power normally remained with the other agencies in these relationships. Moreover, as Powell (1991)

again suggested, these relationships were likely to have been characterised by longer-term instability as central government policies affected each agency's financial resources and priorities.

The position of the Education Facilities Development Officer in the NOPES programme in Midcity reflected this wider approach to co-operative working. The relationship between Midcity City Council and the external sport and education project that employed the Education Facilities Development Officer was characterised by the resource exchange approach and an associated lack of stability. As such, the Education Facilities Development Officer had little involvement in key strategic policy decisions for NOPES, such as the selection of projects, but rather represented a human resource required by Midcity City Council to deliver these policy decisions. Although not a key focus of this study, the place of the Project Manager contracted to oversee the construction of facilities may also be viewed in a similar light.

Links (and their absence) between the Sports Services Division and particular NOPES projects were also indicative of the resource-based approach to co-operative working. Sports Services had greatest involvement in the project at Fairhurst College and were due to manage the NOPES facility once it opened. This facility was a resource that was expected to provide strategic benefits to Sports Services in terms of contributing to city-wide targets. Conversely, Sports Services did not become involved in the management of the similar NOPES facility at Cameron Community College. It could be speculated that this non-decision was predicated upon the lack of strategic benefit to Sports Services of managing this facility due to the nearby development of a Sports Services-operated leisure centre.

A related issue was the evidence that the relationship between NOPES and other sport and leisure facilities was a competitive, rather than co-operative, one. The position of projects in this competitive environment was weakened by school staff commonly lacking experience and expertise in managing school sport facilities for wider community use. Although it was unclear whether there was a direct relationship between the two factors, it is

interesting to note that, where the Chair of Governors provided significant business expertise at the tennis centre project, tensions between Midcity City Council and the schools involved in the project were greater than at other projects. As well as the existence of a competitive environment, the requirement that projects were to be financially self-sustaining also impeded collaborative working. This feature was demonstrated by the paradox that officers from the Sports Regeneration Unit found it difficult to develop programmes collaboratively with NOPES projects due to being charged for usage when competition with other Sports Services facilities inhibited projects' ability to generate income.

Other than at Fairhurst College, the only project that had collaborative links with Sports Regeneration staff was at Cameron Community College. This was attributed to there being a member of staff specifically employed to develop the NOPES facility at this school. This example was again indicative of the importance of resource availability to enhancing collaborative capacity. For example, at a number of the schools in this case study, it was the combination of the physical resource provided by NOPES facilities with the human resources provided through the School Sport Partnership programme that enabled improved informal collaboration with other schools.

Whereas collaborative links with other schools and other organisations such as sports clubs were all informally based, the existence or otherwise of formal partnership groups at projects was also an interesting issue. Three projects had formalised partnership groups with these groups representing new ways of working for the schools involved. At two projects, at Fairhurst College and the tennis centre, formal partnership groups were required due to there being a variety of stakeholders with a direct interest in the management of the facility. Again, there were indications that one of the reasons for tension at the tennis centre project was the desire of Midcity City Council to be involved in management issues despite the removal of their financial contribution to the project. At Cameron Community College, the existence of a formal partnership group can be attributed to the drive

provided by the Community Sports Co-ordinator employed to develop the project. Conversely, at Dalgarno Community College and Eddington High School, there were no formal partnership groups as, in each case, the school was the sole agency responsible for their NOPES facilities and existing staff had limited time and limited inclination to instigate such a group.

7.5.2 Effect of Partnership and Collaboration on Policy Process and Outputs

At portfolio level, the strategic steering group took an initial key role in the governance of the NOPES programme and, in particular, the selection of projects. As described in the previous subsection, the strength of the relationship between the two key members of the partnership group, the PE & Sport Strategic Manager and the Head of Sport, meant that these two officers were instrumental in the selection of projects. Consultation with marginalised members of the strategic steering group and other agencies regarding the selection of projects merely provided a level of formal accountability required by the two key members.

Despite the combined authority of the PE & Sport Strategic Manager and the Head of Sport, the wider collaborative context did have an influence over the selection process as suggested in the strategic-relational approach (Hay, 2002). As the PE & Sport Strategic Manager himself pointed out, the lack of strategic infrastructure beyond the two key individuals hindered a truly strategic selection of projects. The lack of strategic infrastructure could be identified as a consequence of the uncertain status of school and community sport within Midcity City Council which may also have contributed to the lack of challenge to the decisions taken by the two key individuals regarding the composition of the portfolio. The other aspect of the wider context of PE and sport to influence the selection of projects was the need to generate additional revenue which led to the prioritisation of projects where external funding was available. Generating the funding from

NOPES and other sources was the only way in which partnership working at portfolio level contributed to the production of beneficial outputs.

Subsequent to the selection process, partnership and collaborative working has played a minimal role in the governance of the whole portfolio. Apart from the decision to remove one project from the portfolio, application and construction processes involved the enactment, rather than the making, of strategic decisions. As such, these processes were mainly undertaken by the Education Facilities Development Officer and the capital Project Manager with the PE & Sport Strategic Manager and the Head of Sport having minimal involvement in these tasks. As in the selection of projects, a level of accountability for decisions and progress during the application and construction phases was provided by the strategic steering group.

However, there was evidence that the lack of integrated, partnership-based governance of the NOPES portfolio after its initial selection had implications for the design and operation of facilities. Firstly, lack of communication between individuals involved in the design of NOPES facilities across the portfolio and individual project staff was identified as contributing to weaknesses in the design of three of the facilities. Furthermore, the absence of any sustained steer from the strategic steering group contributed to initial expectations for the instigation of management groups at all projects not being met.

Finally, it is worth considering the role of partnership and collaborative working at project level. Governance was again the key role of formal partnership groups at two of the three projects where such groups were in place. For example, these groups developed policies for the management and operation of the NOPES facilities. However, the tennis centre project provided an example where a lack of authority and tensions within a partnership group negatively affected efforts to develop policies for the management of the NOPES facility. Conversely, the improved partnership working between the school and Sports Services initiated by the NOPES

project at Fairhurst College generated unanticipated outputs in terms of school access to the adjacent swimming pool.

Compared to the portfolio level, partnership and collaborative working played a greater role at project level in the production of outcomes. In general, it was informal links with other schools and sports clubs that enhanced the usage of NOPES facilities and enabled desired objectives to be met. As was highlighted in the previous subsection, the availability of human resources supported the development of these links and the achievement of policy objectives. At projects where an ethos of partnership working was less established (for example, Dalgarno Community College) and there were fewer human resources to support such new ways of working, there was a greater focus on generating income to sustain the project rather than achieving other social outcomes. At Fairhurst College, the expertise of Sports Services staff in managing facilities was reflected in financial sustainability being less of an issue.

Chapter Eight: Lonborough Case Study

8.1 Introduction

Lonborough Council is an inner London borough local authority which covered an area with a population of approaching 245,000. Statistics from 2001 showed that Lonborough had significant areas of severe deprivation with 20 of its 21 wards in the 20 percent most deprived wards in the country. At the same time, percentages of school pupils eligible for free school meals were well above the national average (53 percent of secondary school pupils in Lonborough as opposed to 17 percent nationally). At approximately 65 percent, Lonborough also had one of the highest proportions of ethnic minority residents in the country.

From the outset of the New Opportunities for PE and Sport (NOPES) programme there was no overall control of Lonborough Council. However, the council changed from a minority Labour to a minority Liberal Democrat administration in the local elections in 2002. The council adopted a cabinet structure in 2001 with an executive of 10 members in addition to the mayor. Portfolios held by members of the executive included Children's Services & Education, Regeneration & Culture, Leisure & Sport.

The education system within Lonborough underwent a number of changes from the late 1990s onwards. As a result of unsatisfactory OFSTED reports in 1998 and 1999, Lonborough Council was directed by the Department for Education and Skills to provide all education services through an out-sourced contract. This contract was awarded to the education division of a major consultancy and construction company (referred to here as Const Education). In this contract both Lonborough Council and Const Education had some responsibility for education strategy in Lonborough. The announcement and initial stages of the NOPES programme occurred while this arrangement was in place.

Subsequently, in 2003 Const Education requested, and was granted, termination of the contract. In a temporary arrangement, an alternative private-sector company was given responsibility for managing the education service in Lonborough. Throughout the period from 2003 to the 2007, responsibilities for education in Lonborough were gradually transferred back to the local authority. In this period, a number of city academies were established in Lonborough which were independent of the local authority. The establishment of the city academies reflected and enhanced the large diversity in types of school in the case study area.

Two School Sport Partnerships (SSPs) initially established in 2001 expanded throughout the period of this case study to encompass all the schools in Lonborough. The expansion of the SSPs was not based on the geographical location of schools. One of the SSPs was initially housed within the local authority (and physically located in the same building as the Sports Development Team) before transferring in 2004 to the first Sports College in Lonborough.

In the periods preceding and encompassing this study, responsibility for sport and leisure passed between various departments as part of a number of changes to the organisational structure of the local authority. Prior to this study, the Leisure Department had been merged with the Regeneration Department to form Regeneration & Leisure. Subsequent changes placed leisure functions in the Education & Leisure Department and then, as of 2002, in the Environment & Leisure Department. In a further re-organisation during the period covered by this study, the Parks & Sports Section was included in the Culture, Libraries & Leisure Section of the Environment & Housing Department. There were two subsections of the Parks & Sports Section, namely the Sports Development Team (SDT) and the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit. In Lonborough, local authority owned leisure facilities and sports grounds were operated by a not-for-profit leisure trust which also operated facilities in other boroughs in London. A Sports Action Zone (SAZ) covered five of the wards in the local authority area as well as part of an adjacent borough.

Besides the findings on portfolio-level partnership and collaboration presented in this chapter, analysis of data from interviewees at two NOPES projects is also presented. These two projects are:

- A new two-court sports hall, fitness room and changing facilities at Irving Special School, a school for pupils with autism and asperger's syndrome aged 11 to 19. The project received NOPES funding of £1.2 million and as such was the largest school-based project in the Lonborough NOPES portfolio. The school is located in a densely populated ward that was in the 10% most deprived in England.

- A new, floodlit multi-use games area located in the playground of Jackson Primary School. The school is located in a ward that was in the 5% most deprived in England. Pupils were from a diverse range of ethnic groups with 37 different languages represented in the school. The 2004 OFSTED report stated that 25% of pupils had special educational needs. The NOPES project received funding of £107,950.

In addition to these two projects, portfolio-level interviewees also provided data on the NOPES project based in Kaplan Park which was close to the centre of London. The project was reported to have cost a total of approximately £2.5 million which included the initial NOPES award of £1.4 million. The new facilities comprised a changing pavilion with capacity for 60 to 70 people, two tennis courts, three netball courts, one basketball court, three 5-a-side artificial turf football pitches and a large multi-activity area.

Before presenting the findings from empirical data in Lonborough, a few comments on the process of data collection in this case are necessary. Compared to the two case studies presented in previous chapters, the pace of progress in the NOPES programme was slow in Lonborough for a variety of reasons. Furthermore, for a period, gaining access to interview relevant

stakeholders in the NOPES programme was problematic. For these reasons, much of the data collection relied on interviewee recall over an elongated period of time. As a result, some caution is required when considering the interpretation of findings presented throughout this chapter.

8.2 Partnerships in the NOPES Programme

8.2.1 Portfolio Level

A portfolio steering group was established in Lonborough from the outset of the NOPES programme. Compared to many of the other portfolio steering groups in the NOPES programme, the group in Lonborough was characterised by its small membership (Loughborough Partnership, 2005).The Lonborough steering group was initially chaired by the Head of Asset Management from Lonborough Council Education Department. Other early members of the steering group were:

- a Senior Architectural Assistant from Const Education
- the Sports Development Manager (Environment and Leisure Department)
- the Senior School Advisor with responsibility for PE (local authority Education Department)
- Community Service Project Officer (Environment and Leisure Department).

During the time period covered by this study, there were changes to the membership of this group. Due to his impending retirement, the Head of Asset Management shared the chair of the group with the Education Property Services Manager from the start of 2005, with the Education Property Services Manager becoming sole chair in mid 2006. An officer who was line managed by the Education Property Services Manager also joined the steering group during this period. Furthermore, over time the

involvement in the steering group of the Senior School Advisor decreased as her responsibility for PE was reduced.

According to the Head of Asset Management, the initial membership of the steering group 'chose itself' as those involved were suggested as providing the skills and expertise required for the NOPES programme as well as having the roles to deliver the selected portfolio. However, the Strategic Development Manager for Sport later commented that the steering group did not contain all relevant stakeholders. The members of the steering group had very different roles alternatively encompassing either capital project management or service delivery. Furthermore, members were employed within different departments in the local authority. A number of the members of the group had not worked with one another prior to the NOPES programme and had little knowledge of other members' respective roles within the local authority. Only the Sports Development Manager and the Schools Advisor had extensive prior experience of working collaboratively together. Notably, these individuals had worked together on the TOPS and SSP programmes which, similar to NOPES, both encompassed school and community sport.

Despite the lack of prior relationships, interviewees generally reported that relationships in the group had been good with the Education Property Services Manager identifying that there had been an absence of conflict between members. Interestingly, the Community Service Project Officer commented that the inter-departmental nature of the group 'added to the complication but added to the value'.

Throughout its involvement in the NOPES programme, the steering group's mode of operation appeared to undergo a number of changes. In some phases of the NOPES programme, there were frequent and regular meetings of the steering group. At other times, steering group meetings were arranged on an ad-hoc basis and email communication between members became more prevalent. The reasons for the steering group's changing modes of operation were unclear. The Education Property

Services Manager stated that the steering group would be dissolved in the later part of 2007 when the spending of NOPES capital funding was complete and all school-based facilities were built.

The roles of particular individuals within the steering group were of particular interest. A key individual in the NOPES programme in Lonborough was the Senior Architectural Assistant from Const Education whose role was to manage the NOPES portfolio on an ongoing basis as well as oversee the application and construction processes for all of the school-based projects. The commissioning of a private sector company to manage a capital-build programme was not unusual in Lonborough. In the case of NOPES, the engagement of Const Education in this role was viewed by the Head of Asset Management as natural due to the overall relationship between the company and the local authority at the outset of the NOPES programme. Although this wider relationship ceased during the period covered by this study, the Senior Architectural Assistant's continuing role was viewed by more than one interviewee as a legacy of Const Education's involvement in the management of the functions of the local education authority (LEA).

From the perspective of a number of members of the steering group, it was constructive to have a single person responsible for almost all of the management tasks required in the NOPES programme. The Head of Asset Management suggested that this allowed effective relationships to be built with schools' staff who, therefore, had a single point of contact for issues connected to NOPES. This view was reinforced by interviewees from both Irving Special School and Jackson Primary School. Furthermore, the involvement of the Senior Architectural Assistant was recognised by a number of interviewees as providing a level of continuity throughout the development of the NOPES programme in Lonborough. In particular, the Education Property Services Manager commented that the continuous involvement of the Senior Architectural Assistant ensured that the NOPES programme was unaffected by the ongoing changes in the overall management of education in Lonborough.

Interviewees had different perspectives on the implications of the Senior Architectural Assistant being employed by a private sector company and being based outwith London. The Sports Development Manager adopted a neutral position in commenting that 'I don't think the fact that she has been an external person has any positives or negatives really'. For the officer from the Education Property Services team, the relationship with the Senior Architectural Assistant was only affected by the geographical location of her workplace which necessitated greater levels of electronic and telephonic communication rather than face-to-face contact which the officer would have preferred. Only the Community Service Project Officer offered a negative perspective on the involvement of an individual from a private sector company. Recognising some tension between the values of the public and private sector, the Community Service Project Officer believed that the Senior Architectural Assistant's 'objectives are different from our objectives and sometimes they are not reconcilable. … There may have been more cohesion or synergy if the whole portfolio was run by somebody in Lonborough [Council]'.

The position of the Community Service Project Officer is also worthy of further, brief comment. Due to the park-based location of the both the Kaplan Park project and an outdoor adventure facility, the Community Service Project Officer was invited to manage the capital development of these projects on behalf of the Environment & Leisure Department. This arrangement contrasted with that in place for the remainder of the school-based projects in the NOPES portfolio which were overseen by the Senior Architectural Assistant. The Community Service Project Officer reported some difficulties with this division of responsibility. She felt that the two projects that she was responsible for were somewhat peripheral to the remainder of the NOPES portfolio (despite being amongst the largest projects). Furthermore, she identified difficulties in communications with the Fund (which had to be relayed through the Senior Architectural Assistant) and obtaining up-to-date information on the overall budget for the NOPES portfolio.

8.2.2 Project Level

Irving Special School

The key partnership in the NOPES project at Irving Special School was between the school and the local authority's Disability Sports Development Officer. Although the school was to have overall responsibility for the NOPES facility once it became open, the task of programming use of the facility beyond the school day was to be devolved to the Disability Sports Development Officer. From the perspective of the school's Bursar the arrangement suited the school because school staff did not have the capacity to develop community usage of the facility in isolation and had not had previous experience of doing so. Although the role of programming a sports facility was a new one for the Disability Sports Development Officer, at the time the NOPES facility opened, the SDT had entered into a similar arrangement at another school in the local authority area.

In general, the relationship between the Disability Sports Development Officer and the school was not a new one and was not confined to the NOPES project. Prior to the project, the Disability Sports Development Officer worked with the school in the development of, and training of school staff for, curricular and extra-curricular sporting activities. However, the development of the NOPES project represented a change in the extent and nature of partnership working between the respective agencies. This change of relationship, and the development of the project more generally, was described by the Bursar as a 'leap of faith' for the school. Although the new management partnership had been planned from the inception of the project, there was no formal agreement in place between the school and the Disability Sports Development Officer.

The lack of formality in the partnership between the school and the Disability Sports Development Officer mirrored some uncertainty amongst interviewees regarding the instigation of a management group for the project. At the outset of the project, a group consisting of the PE Co-

ordinator, the Bursar and Head Teacher from the school together with the Disability Sports Development Officer, a Partnership Development Manager and the Portfolio Manager met to consider the development of the project. However, this group did not meet during the construction phase of the project and, since the group originally convened, there were a number of changes in the individuals who held the relevant posts. The Bursar of Irving Special School, who remained involved in the project since its inception, envisaged the group being reinstated once the facility formally opened. This view was also supported by the Partnership Development Manager and the school's PE Co-ordinator, who both came into post during the project's construction phase. However, the Disability Sports Development Officer stated that local authority policy disbarred him from becoming a member of a formal management group although he was able to offer support if one was instigated.

Jackson Primary School

There were no formal partnerships for the NOPES project at Jackson Primary School. At the point where construction of the facility was complete, the school's Head Teacher stated that he had 'just driven [the project] myself so far'. The school had sole responsibility for the management of the facility both during and beyond the school day. It was anticipated that members of school staff would take on these responsibilities as part of existing roles although the Head Teacher also suggested that additional staff could be employed within the school to co-ordinate the usage of the NOPES facility beyond the school day.

Kaplan Park

A variety of stakeholders had input into the NOPES project in Kaplan Park. During the development of the project, large-scale meetings were held with all stakeholders in the project including the Sports Development Manager, the SAZ Director, staff from the adjacent school, representatives of the Education Department, potential users of the facility, including netball clubs,

and other community representatives such as those from the Friends of Kaplan Park organisation. A smaller steering group, restricted to the individuals involved in the construction of the NOPES facility, also met regularly on site.

Post-opening, the NOPES facility was due to be managed by the not-for-profit trust that managed all local authority-owned leisure facilities in Lonborough. As part of the contractual arrangement between Lonborough Council and the leisure trust, a management board for the project was to be instigated which would meet monthly once the project opened. The Community Service Project Officer described the role of this group as 'ensuring that the objectives of the project are met'.

8.3 The Collaborative Context of the NOPES Programme

8.3.1 Portfolio Level

Sporting Context

As stated in the introduction, the Parks & Sports Section of the local authority comprised of the SDT and the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit. The SDT consisted of five full-time members of staff, a relatively small team when compared with other local authorities. The Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit was responsible for overseeing the management, by the not-for-profit trust, of local authority leisure facilities and sports grounds. Furthermore, from 2004, this unit also assumed responsibility for the Lonborough Community Games, a programme of sporting competition delivered in schools and community venues.

Interviewees had different views on the profile of sport within the local authority. The Sports Development Manager commented that, in the ongoing changes to local authority structures, sport had 'slid down quite dramatically really' in terms of its organisational profile. However, this individual emphasised that there was good councillor support for sports

provision and a wider recognition that sport could impact across a number of different departments. Similarly, the Strategic Development Manager for Sport suggested, at the end of the period of this study, that the increasing priority given to sport had 'really gathered pace in the last three to four years'. He cited the allocation of £12.3 million from the local authority for the upgrading of sports facilities and £150,000 to the Lonborough Community Games as evidence of this heightened priority.

There was no overall strategy for sport within Lonborough throughout the period of this study. A Best Value review conducted in 2001 and 2002 identified 'room for improvement in strategic direction' within the Parks & Sports Section (Lonborough Council, 2001, p3). Subsequently, towards the end of the study, the Strategic Development Manager for Sport stated that the local authority was in a position to provide a 'strategic overview' for sport in Lonborough and that there had being ongoing plans to develop a formal sports strategy. However, an interviewee from a national sports agency identified that a lack of strategic leadership for sport in Lonborough did present challenges in co-ordinating sports programmes. For the SDT the lack of an overall strategy for sport meant that

> *we really carry on in our own merry way … we pick up the programmes that we want to work with and carry on working with them regardless of the powers that be up there who haven't got a clue sometimes, I think, of what we do.*
>
> (Sports Development Manager)

Despite the lack of an overall strategy for sport, a Strategy for Sports Development was in place for the period from 2001 to 2006 (Lonborough Council, 2001). However, this document appeared to a greater extent to be a justification of existing practices rather than a strategic planning document. As such, the strategy provided an informative insight into the purposes and objectives of the SDT. The strategy focused primarily on the development of participation in sport rather than the promotion of sporting excellence. Interestingly, in linking sports development, physical education

and NOPES, the strategy identified the SDT as ‘responsible for helping to improve the quality of the physical education programme in schools’ (Lonborough Council, 2001, p8).

Other themes drawn from the Strategy for Sports Development demonstrated a number of interesting features. Throughout the strategy there was a focus on the SDT directly delivering or providing sporting opportunities (Lonborough Council, 2001). It could be argued that this focus ran counter to central government policies advocating an enabling role for local authorities. However, more in line with central government policy, partnership was a recurrent theme in the Sports Development Strategy. The statement that ‘implementation of the strategy will be dependent on the future development of partnerships, which will make the best use of existing resources and avoid duplication’ was representative of the approach to partnership elucidated in the strategy (Lonborough Council, 2001, p20). Thus the general approach to partnership was limited to improving effectiveness and efficiency rather than any strategic policy making role.

Without an overall strategy for sport, interviewees emphasised the contribution that sport could make to other strategies and agendas in Lonborough. Towards the end of the period covered by this study, the Development & Improvement Manager (Sports & Physical Activity) commented on the development of this approach:

> *what we have managed to do over the last couple of years is make sure that sport and physical activity is prioritised in other people’s, not traditionally sport and physical activity, strategies.*

In particular, interviewees at this stage mentioned the contribution of sport to the Every Child Matters agenda, obesity management and prevention strategies and crime targets for the local authority area. Similarly, at the start of the NOPES programme, interviewees also highlighted the contribution that NOPES could make to education and health components of the Lonborough Community Strategy (Lonborough Council, 2003) which was

agreed by the Local Strategic Partnership in 2003. However, potentially linked with the timescale mentioned by the Development & Improvement Manager (Sports & Physical Activity), the Community Strategy made no specific mention of sport. Moreover, sport was absent in the Local Strategic Partnership structure (Lonborough Alliance, 2005). These features suggest that, certainly at the beginning of the NOPES programme, sport and physical activity were somewhat peripheral to core priorities in Lonborough Council.

Besides, the Parks & Sports Section of the local authority, a Sports Action Zone covered the north of Lonborough and a similar area of a neighbouring local authority. The SAZ was one of the 12 zones initiated by Sport England in 2000 and the area that it covered had been chosen because of the level of deprivation in the area as well as, it was reported, the enthusiasm of the two MPs whose constituencies encompassed the zone.

The SAZ was originally hosted by a charitable housing trust, as Sport England had specified that all SAZs were to be hosted by non-local authority organisations. After initial problems, the SAZ was restructured in 2002 and was then hosted by a not-for-profit association that encompassed a variety of local public and private sector organisations. A new Director of the SAZ was appointed in early 2003. A SAZ board was in place which included the two MPs, representatives of the two local authorities (including Lonborough's Strategic Development Manager for Sport), a Partnership Development Manager (from the other local authority), an Equity and Social Inclusion Manager from Sport England and other local voluntary sector representatives.

The SAZ had multiple aims and objectives. Firstly, the SAZ Director described the initial focus given to the SAZ by Sport England as the development of participation and widening of access to sport and physical activity. The SAZ also had a broader role to 'look holistically across the whole sport agenda and look what sport could do across social inclusion and education' (SAZ Director). In addition, documentary and interviewee

evidence showed that the SAZ had a further role in ‘developing and enhancing existing, and establishing new, partnerships and testing new ways of working’ (SAZ, 2004, p3).

As such, the development of ‘partnerships and networks’ (SAZ Director) was a key focus for the SAZ. Partnership working within the SAZ encompassed a number of different types of organisation and the SAZ Director commented that a large part of his initial role ‘was to start pulling people together, whether it was the local authority, whether it was larger strategic organisations or whether it was voluntary sector groups’. The development of partnerships was seen as key to meeting the objectives of the SAZ as it did not directly deliver the majority of sporting activities that were developed. Associated with this, the SAZ Director was committed to acquiring funding from a number of new and different sources including public sector neighbourhood renewal funding, private sector companies and other funding organisations such as the Football Foundation.

Educational Context

As in the sporting context, interviewees commonly identified a lack of priority and strategic focus on sport and physical activity within the local authority Education Department and the other organisations responsible for education in Lonborough. Before the period encompassed by this study, there had been a reduction in staff within the Education Department who had responsibility for PE and school sport. Prior to the NOPES programme, the position of PE Advisor had been discontinued and throughout the duration of this study the Senior School Advisor’s focus on PE diminished to the point where any input was marginal. There was no evidence to suggest that these changes were directly attributable to the changes that had affected the organisation of education functions of the local authority.

Interviewees recognised that the strategic development of PE and school sport was negatively affected by the lack of staff in the Education Department with overall responsibility for these issues. For example, an

interviewee from a national sports agency believed that the approach to the development of national education-focused sports programmes in Lonborough was ‘very much ad-hoc’ with ‘the borough not really in a position to take some of those things forward’. Internally, a Partnership Development Manager bemoaned the lack of a ‘voice’ and a ‘direct link’ into the LEA and suggested that opportunities for funding school sport, for example through the Extended Schools programme, had been missed as a result.

Furthermore, it was suggested that the lack of direction from the LEA affected the co-ordination of PE and school sport in Lonborough. Although the variety of types of schools within Lonborough was thought by interviewees to bring benefits to school sport, individual schools were recognised as demonstrating a high degree of autonomy in their responses to PE and school sport programmes. The Sports Development Manager believed that Partnership Development Managers did not have the same ‘clout’ to force schools to adopt joint approaches as the PE Advisor had had when in post. Supporting this, one Partnership Development Manager identified difficulties co-ordinating school sport in secondary schools.

Reflecting the lack of a wider strategic approach, the composition of the two SSPs was not based on the geographic location of schools in Lonborough. In the view of the Community Games Development Manager, the speed with which the Youth Sport Trust attempted to instigate the two SSPs had been one factor behind their non-geographical composition. As a result, the Community Games Development Manager thought the composition of the two SSPs constrained any strategic approach to school sport.

Furthermore, although there was increasing contact between the two SSPs in Lonborough, there was little joint strategic planning across these partnerships. As a result, there was evidence of the SSPs taking a bottom-up approach to development and delivery based on the needs of individual schools. There was also, one of the Partnership Development Managers described, a ‘level of competition between the partnerships which I think will

always exist'. This PDM also described differences in the initial ethos and working practices of the two partnerships which inhibited co-operation between them. Similarly, the interviewee from a national sports agency described good, individual relationships between the two PDMs but a lack of joined-up working between the two SSPs more generally.

Relationships in the Collaborative Context

Overall, the degree to which partnerships in Lonborough were formalised was minimal. Moreover, as suggested earlier in the section, there was little joint consideration of strategic development across the whole local authority area. That is not to say, that organisations did not adopt partnership or collaborative working approaches. Rather, across stakeholders in PE, school and community sport in Lonborough, partnership working and collaboration was characterised by the diversity of different relationships and levels of integration between organisations and individuals. In general, the relationships between the SDT, the SSPs and the SAZ were significantly different from those relationships that the Sport Strategy and Contracts Unit were part of. This subsection will consider these two sets of relationships in turn.

<u>Collaboration between 'Sports Development' Agencies</u>

In general, interviewees described excellent working relationships between the SDT, the SSPs and the SAZ. For example, the SAZ Director commented

> *The ways that we work within Lonborough are still very much around working with voluntary sector groups, working with sports development, working with PDMs and we all work really well in partnership.*

A similar and typical comment made by a Partnership Development Manager was that 'there is a lot of collaboration in terms of everyone gets on with what they are doing but there is a very, very good network'. From

the perspective of the SAZ Director the relationship with the SDT had been strong from the outset of the SAZ whereas relationships with the SSPs, and in particular one SSP that had a number of schools in the SAZ, had developed over time. The Sports Development Manager identified that the SDT had close working relationships with the two SSPs from their inception.

Interviewees identified that these agencies had overlapping aims and shared a common ethos. Commenting on the aims of the SDT and SSPs, the Sports Development Manager stated

> *We still have slightly different roles because their role, as they see it, is to raise the standard of sport in schools. Our role is to increase the sport in schools and everywhere. And those two, at the moment, marry together very well. And we do both of them together, so we are both fulfilling each others' objectives quite nicely together.*

More specifically, responsibility for the national target for 2 hours of PE and Sport was identified as shared between the SDT and the SSPs. Although the SAZ had a slightly different focus on social inclusion, the 'main aim [of the SAZ] to get people involved in sport who were never involved in sport before' (SAZ Director) was very compatible with the aims of the other agencies. Moreover, the SAZ Director described what he believed to be a common ethos with the SDT in particular

> *it is much more the way in which sports development works. And I think that "development" is probably the key word because they do look to develop. They are not just about coming in and delivering.*

Collaboration between the SDT, SAZ and SSPs was typically informal, based on personal relationships and frequent contact. Personal relationships between staff from the different agencies had benefited from interaction in individuals' prior working environments and ongoing contact in other contexts. Examples of this prior interaction and ongoing contact provided by interviewees included the SAZ Director previously working

within the SDT, one of the SSPs previously being based in the same building as the SDT and a PDM participating in rugby with a member of SAZ staff. Somewhat tongue-in-cheek, the Sports Development Manager commented ‘everyone used to work here and we only let them go a little way away, so we keep on working with them’.

Although there were some formal meetings and arrangements between the SDT, SSPs and SAZ, the majority of contact was described as informal. The SAZ Director’s description of his relationships with the SSPs and, in particular, the SDT was that

> *It’s a little bit informal but then there is [sic] times when it has to be formal but most of the time because there is that ongoing dialogue and I am talking about every two days. I speak to [the Sports Development Manager] all the time … they are all aware of what is going on.*

Similar evidence was provided by the Sports Development Manager and a PDM, although both these interviewees also identified the increasing prevalence of formal meetings between different agencies over the period of this study.

Interviewees from the relevant agencies described the focus of the collaborative relationships as being concerned with both strategic development and operational delivery. Towards the end of this study, a Partnership Development Manager commented that collaborative work with the SDT was increasingly focused about strategic planning to meet the 2 hours of PE and school sport target. Similarly, the SAZ Director stated that he commonly included the Sports Development Manager in, what he termed, ‘strategic meetings’ and the SAZ also supported the SDT in accessing external funding. It was notable, however, that these strategic aspects of collaboration appeared to be concerned with single issues rather than any development of a common strategy for sport across Lonborough as a whole.

Collaboration that addressed operational delivery appeared to be more ingrained and multi-faceted than was the case with strategic development. In general, echoing the comments at the start of this subsection, the Sports Development Manager commented

> *At the delivery level, everything totally works together and in partnership. … We get on really well with everyone delivering sports development at that level. And everyone works together, it's fab.*

At what might be considered the most marginal level of benefit, interviewees recognised that collaboration between the different agencies ensured that there was not duplication between the activities that each agency was responsible for. There was also evidence that, at a slightly more integrated level, there was co-ordination in the delivery of activities. Regarding collaboration with the SSPs, the Sports Development Manager stated that 'we will deliver some [activities] for them. They will deliver some [activities] for us'. Furthermore, a Partnership Development Manager also described the benefits of the support available from the other agencies

> *I love the way that we all work. … If anybody ever gets into trouble, you can always ring somebody to get you out of it or even just for advice.*

At the greatest extent of integration, the agencies delivered or developed opportunities jointly. The SAZ Director described the contributions of his organisation and either the SSPs or the SDT to specific programmes developed collaboratively. Similarly, in describing collaborative activities between the SDT and SSPs, the Sports Development Manager stated 'a lot of the schools actually don't know the difference between us and the PDMs, which is fine. That is not a problem to us at all.' This quote is interesting for the lack of concern for benefits that could be specifically attributable to the different organisations within the collaborative relationship.

Finally, in this subsection, it is worthwhile to briefly consider the other agencies that interviewees considered as partners. Both the SAZ Director and a Partnership Development Manager described a degree of collaboration with staff delivering the Positive Futures programme in Lonborough. Organisations from the voluntary sector, and especially sports clubs, were also regarded as partners of both the SAZ and the SDT. There was also evidence of collaborative work with other sections of the local authority, for example the Play Service and Youth Service. None of these collaborative relationships appeared as integrated as those between the SDT, SAZ and SSPs.

Relationships with the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit

Although collaboration between the SAZ, the SSPs and the SDT was harmonious and considered effective, relationships between these agencies and the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit were more strained. Although there was a degree of commonality in the reasons for these strained relationships, there were some differences in emphasis in the evidence provided regarding relationships that the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit had with the SAZ, the SSPs and the SDT respectively. Therefore, each of these relationships will be considered briefly in turn utilising data from not only these agencies but also from staff in the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit. Finally, the subsection will examine the role of the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit in facility development and, in particular, its relationship with the not-for-profit company that operated local authority leisure facilities.

The relationship between the SAZ and the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit appeared to be particularly poor. After making some disparaging remarks about the SAZ, the Strategic Development Manager for Sport conceded that ‘I guess the SAZ are a key partner. I just don’t think that relationship is terribly well defined’. The SAZ Director shared a similarly poor view of the relationship. Given that the Strategic Development Manager for Sport was a member of the SAZ Board, it was somewhat surprising that another member of the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit commented that ‘one of things is

that the business plan and the key targets of the SAZ: we would like to know what they are' (Community Games Development Manager).

The different organisational and geographical contexts of the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit and the SAZ constrained the relationship between the two agencies. Interviewees from the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit viewed it as their role to ensure that there was a co-ordinated approach to sport across the whole of Lonborough. However, the Community Games Development Manager intimated that co-ordination with the SAZ was difficult because it only covered a small section of Lonborough and a neighbouring local authority. Furthermore, the SAZ Director also recognised that the freedom enabled by the SAZ's position, as external to the local authority, also affected relationships with the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit. This feature was effectively elucidated by the SAZ Director

> *Our relationship with [the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit] is very fractious because we don't toe the line and we say what we think we have got to say and, at the moment, they have got no recourse to stop us saying that. But I've always said that that is what I am employed to do. … It's a shame that because it has led to a real feeling of mistrust between the two organisations. I don't mistrust [the Strategic Development Manager for Sport] and his team. What I don't like is the way that they are working because it does not fit our ethos.*

Further explanation of the different ethos' was provided by the SAZ Director. He believed that the SAZ adopted an approach that was based on enabling local and community organisations. Conversely, he disagreed with what he saw as the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit's approach of direct delivery which the SAZ Director suggested was based on a belief that 'well this is what we are going to do. We do it best'.

In particular, these tensions coalesced around the development of the Lonborough Community Games. The SAZ Director reported that he had acquired the initial neighbourhood renewal funding to deliver the

Lonborough Community Games. The Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit had subsequently taken over the delivery of the Lonborough Community Games and done so, the SAZ Director believed, in a manner that was not consistent with the ethos of the SAZ and which had a negative effect on a number of voluntary groups the SAZ worked with.

The operation of the Lonborough Community Games by the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit also appeared to affect relationships with the SSPs and the SDT. At a general level, the Community Games Development Manager recognised that 'between the Lonborough Community Games, sports development, SSPs and all that, interrelationships have been in a bit of a mess really'. There were some formal partnership arrangements in place with SSPs and schools regarding the operation of the Lonborough Community Games. Towards the end of this study, the two PDMs were members of a newly constituted group that considered the strategy for the Lonborough Community Games and, prior to their involvement, each individual school signed a service level agreement with the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit.

However, these formal arrangements appeared to mask inherent tensions. A PDM viewed the development of the Lonborough Community Games as 'not sustainable' and the SAZ Director suggested that they duplicated aspects of the work of the SSPs. Conversely, interviewees from the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit suggested that the Lonborough Community Games merited a bigger role and profile within the SSPs. However, a comment from the Community Games Development Manager was telling in confirming some of the SAZ Director's criticisms and the limitations of a partnership approach to the development of the Lonborough Community Games:

> *I think because we moved the Lonborough Community Games out efficiently and effectively and very dynamically, we didn't sit back to wait for everybody's agreement from every partner in every part of Lonborough to say "are you OK with this?". For sportcoachUK and*

other key partners such as NGBs, we had to say "this is achievable, let's drive it now (emphasised)" because the time frame of funding is important.

For both the SAZ Director and a PDM, the development and the profile of the Lonborough Community Games had a negative effect on the SDT. A PDM believed that the placing of responsibility for the games in the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit had 'caused friction' and led to the SDT 'slipping down the priority list' which she thought was 'a real shame'. Similarly, the SAZ Director commented on the lack of collaborative working between the SDT and the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit. This was recognised by staff from the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit and was the reason why, towards the end of this study, a re-organisation of the two sections was proposed. At the same time, the Sports Development Manager claimed to have 'no idea what is going to happen to us' as part of the re-organisation, indicating the lack of communication between the two sections once more.

Besides the Lonborough Community Games, the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit also had responsibility for sport and leisure facility provision across Lonborough. In this role, the key partner for the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit was the not-for-profit trust that was set up in 2000 by Lonborough Council to operate the leisure centres and sports grounds owned by the local authority. The impetus behind the instigation of the not-for-profit trust was the potential for financial benefits for the local authority. The not-for-profit trust had exemption from commercial property rates on the leisure centres, was perceived to be more likely to attract external funding and, it was initially hoped, would operate facilities at lower cost. The Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit had what was described as a 'client-contractor relationship' with the not-for-profit trust. Formal contracts were in place between the two agencies, although interviewees suggested that these contracts were not overly detailed. Within the constraints of these contracts, interviewees described an ongoing 'partnership' between staff from the two agencies.

Despite the outsourcing of management of facilities, the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit retained overall responsibility for facility development. The not-for-profit trust was 'involved in our strategic planning but we take the overview, who we have partnerships with, what goes where, where the gaps are' (Head of Parks and Sports). This strategic role included working with other agencies in the development of sports facilities. In particular, towards the end of this study, the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit was working with two schools to develop and manage sports facilities at their sites. However, interviewees from the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit recognised that, in general, school staff did not have considerable experience or expertise in managing sports facilities.

In general, however, interviewees described a lack of co-ordination between the development of sports facilities in schools and those that were the responsibility of the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit. Talking about the development of the NOPES programme and facilities in general, the Strategic Development Manager for Sport commented:

> *We've been going down our little furrow, in our little furrow with our sports grounds and our leisure centres and then education has been going down its own track and I don't think there has been enough cross referencing and that is because we lack a facilities development strategy that could become the route or the road map for everyone.*

A similar lack of co-ordination was also anticipated in the Building Schools for the Future programme. Furthermore, the Sports Development Manager suggested that there was also a lack of co-ordination with the Housing Department who also controlled some outdoor sporting facilities.

8.3.2 Project Level

Irving Special School

In the six months before the NOPES facility opened, there was a significant increase in the human and financial resources that Irving Special School could draw on to develop school sport. Within the school itself, the position of PE Co-ordinator had been made permanent. The school's Bursar stated that the PE Co-ordinator provided access to a 'big network [of support] that is going to grow and develop as well'.

The network accessed by the school was further enhanced by the school's inclusion in the local SSP in 2006. The school also benefited from the Partnership Development Manager of this SSP being a governor of the school. Through the SSP, the school was able to access funding from a local charitable organisation that was to pay for coaches to deliver extra-curricular activities in the school. It was also suggested that the SSP could support the development of links between Irving and other special schools in the area, particularly after the NOPES facility was constructed as it could then offer a location to hold inter-school tournaments. However, although two other special schools originally committed to using the NOPES facility once open, one of these schools subsequently pulled out of this arrangement due to a changed situation including two changes of Head Teacher.

As stated in Section 8.2.2, the Disability Sports Development Officer had also supported the development of sporting activities within the school. This individual recognised the potential overlap between his work and that of the SSP and commented that, together with staff from the SSP, 'we've been looking quite carefully at not duplicating stuff' at Irving Special School.

Linked with the avoidance of duplication, the Disability Sports Development Officer was almost solely responsible for developing links between the project and local community organisations. Such links were to be very

important to the project as sports clubs were anticipated to be the primary users of the NOPES facility beyond the school day. It was interesting that the Disability Sports Development Officer suggested that one part of his role in programming usage of the NOPES facility was, effectively, to act as a gatekeeper through ensuring that only those sports clubs deemed suitable would get access to the facility beyond the school day.

Jackson Primary School

From a strategic perspective, the Deputy Head Teacher at Jackson Primary School stated that the NOPES project was ‘was woven into the whole sense of where we are going as a school’. Within the school, the project was viewed as fitting with the Every Child Matters agenda by contributing to the health of pupils through enhancing the profile of, and participation in, sport. Connected with Extended Schools, the project was anticipated to contribute to the school becoming a hub of the local community. A level of community involvement in the school through music, drama and arts was already ‘well established’ and it was anticipated that the availability of the NOPES facility would add a sporting dimension to links with the community. At the time the NOPES project opened, the school had also been involved with the local SSP for two years and through this association staff and training had been provided to develop PE and sport in the school.

Other collaborations with external agencies and organisations were based on the personal contacts of the Head Teacher who was described as ‘the great networker’ with ‘fingers in lots of sports pies’ (Deputy Head Teacher). A number of these personal contacts were developed through the Head Teacher’s membership of the MCC and his previous involvement as a semi-professional footballer. With regard to the NOPES project, the Head Teacher believed that through personal contacts he could access funding from Lords Taverners for cricket activities which would be supported by a number of high profile coaches that he knew. Similarly, the Head Teacher was also in contact with football clubs which he suggested were keen to use the facility. Professional support was also anticipated from the local

authority's Strategic Development Manager for Sport who the Head Teacher 'linked with regularly'.

8.4 NOPES Policy Process and Outputs

8.4.1 Initial Selection of Projects

Initially, the steering group's role was to select the projects to be included in the NOPES portfolio for which the Fund allocated a total of just over £4¼ million. The Head of Asset Management suggested that in the NOPES programme this process, as with similar external funding programmes, was a 'mix of strategy and opportunism'. Subsequently, two interviewees were somewhat critical of the lack of strategic input into the decision making process and management of the NOPES portfolio in general. Both the Sports Development Manager and the Strategic Development Manager for Sport commented that decisions regarding the NOPES portfolio were made in a context in which there was a lack of overall strategic vision regarding the distribution, and potential users, of sports facilities in Lonborough. Connected to this lack of wider strategy, the Community Service Project Officer commented that 'what I think has been missed in [the NOPES programme] is the identification of objectives for the portfolio'. As a result, this officer felt that the steering group did not provide a 'steer' regarding the 'overall vision' for the projects that she was responsible for.

Although interview data was not clear (partly due to incomplete recollection), it appeared that steering group members involved in PE and sport were the main drivers of the selection process. In particular, the knowledge and experience of the Senior Schools Advisor and the Sports Development Manager was described as important in identifying the need for improved sports facilities in particular schools. School need was the key factor in the selection process which was said to be based upon '[school] need primarily and then ensuring the community have access to that'. Two specific criteria used in the top-down assessment of school need were the existence, or otherwise, of existing facilities and the school's involvement, or potential

involvement, in the SSP programme which was rolling out in Lonborough at the time of project selection. The Strategic Development Manager for Sport's retrospective (and external) view of the selection process for school-based NOPES projects was that it was 'more based on [the] logistics' of available space for building facilities.

Besides the top-down input into the selection of projects by members of the steering group, there was also evidence of aspects of, possibly informal, bottom-up influence on this process. The Sports Development Manager commented that part of the steering group's role was to 'ensure the right people are consulted with and have their views heard' in the selection process. Subsequently, this individual was more critical of the influence of local stakeholders and schools on the selection process which, she believed, was 'almost like, if you shout loud enough or if there is a patch of land there, then let's stick something there'. Similarly, the Community Games Development Manager believed that the selection process had been influenced by the 'personalities of the head teachers' and the availability of existing plans for facilities.

The steering group initially selected a NOPES portfolio consisting of 15 projects. The NOPES contribution to projects ranged from over £1 million to £54,000. Projects were located at primary, secondary and special schools as well as at the outdoor adventure facility and at Kaplan Park. Besides being located in a variety of contexts, there were numerous different types of facility. Within the initial portfolio there were eight small projects, which consisted of multi-use games areas based at school sites, as well as larger projects that included a sports hall at Irving Special School and the outdoor netball, tennis, basketball and football facility at Kaplan Park. Confirming the interview data, this overall selection indicated that need, rather than a particularly strategic consideration, was the main criterion in the selection process. However, the projects selected were described as fitting with the asset management plans of the Education Department. Moreover, the Education Property Services Manager suggested that the school-based projects were facilities that the Education Department would have wished to

provide for all schools if there was mainstream funding for new capital facilities rather than merely for school maintenance. However, the lack of strategy in the selection process was further reflected in the Senior Architectural Assistant's comment that the reasons given for the prioritisation of projects within the portfolio were no longer clear when she became involved in the NOPES programme after the initial selection.

Due to the previous experiences of steering group members, the importance of revenue funding for projects was recognised at the outset of the NOPES programme. As a result, NOPES revenue funding was included in the bids for the Kaplan Park and outdoor adventure facility projects. In particular, the Sports Development Manager believed that the Kaplan Park project would be 'difficult to get off the ground without revenue funding'.

After the original selection of projects, a number of projects in the portfolio had to be changed for a variety of reasons. Three projects were removed from the portfolio as the schools at which they were to be located were to be totally rebuilt through the Building Schools for the Future programme. The removal of these projects resulted in disappointment amongst the schools and some contractors fees being lost. The higher than anticipated cost of the Kaplan Park project, amongst others, resulted in other projects being scaled down or requiring partnership funding from the respective schools. Rather than dropping projects from the portfolio, the steering group took a decision to ensure that some form of facility was developed at all schools that had chosen to remain in the programme and were not affected by Building Schools for the Future. Although such decisions were described as 'strategic' in nature by members of the steering group, the compromises made with regard to changes in the portfolio may reflect the lack of broader strategy for the NOPES programme in Lonborough.

8.4.2 Design and Construction of Projects

Other than the strategic decisions regarding the overall composition of the portfolio, the role of the steering group throughout the design and construction phase of the NOPES programme mainly involved operational management. The Sports Development Manager stated that in this phase the steering group fulfilled a role of 'basically trying to get through all the red tape and paperwork in order to get things done'. The steering group also monitored the progress and budget of individual projects to ensure that the whole portfolio advanced concurrently.

During the phase of design and construction, a few members of the steering group undertook the majority of tasks required for the NOPES programme. Much of the work for the school-based projects was undertaken by the Senior Architectural Assistant from the Const Education who then reported back to the steering group on progress. Similarly, the Community Project Service Officer undertook all the commissioning and contracting work required for Kaplan Park and the outdoor adventure facility projects.

Other support to schools during the period of application and construction was provided individually by steering group members. For example, the Schools Advisor provided support to one school to help them make adaptations to the timetable and curriculum in advance of the NOPES facility being built. The Sports Development Manager also reported providing input to projects on operational matters. Such interventions, from the local authority level into individual NOPES projects, fitted with the general pattern in Lonborough of individual action rather than constituting part of a co-ordinated approach from the steering group.

In terms of design, the school-based projects were described as fairly routine. A specific comment from the Education Property Services Manager was that none of these projects 'pushed the boundaries'. However, interviewees did consider the Kaplan Park and outdoor adventure facility as comparatively innovative. The location of the Kaplan Park project in central

London close to other buildings of national significance meant that a slightly unusual and high specification design was developed for the changing facilities. This design was partly responsible for the higher than anticipated cost of the project.

8.4.3 Post-opening of facilities

Post-opening responsibility for the NOPES programme was entirely devolved to staff at particular projects and schools. Portfolio steering group members had divergent views on the possibility and need for any portfolio-level input into NOPES projects after they opened. From the perspective of the Education Property Services Manager, who chaired the steering group and whose role was to manage the school estate more generally, the completion of NOPES facilities marked the end of his involvement in the programme. Other steering group members, such as the Community Service Project Manager and the Sports Development Manager, believed that there was a need for continued portfolio-level input into the NOPES portfolio. For example, the Community Service Project Manager commented that 'there should be ongoing monitoring of the outcomes and it can only be from the portfolio group'. However, she recognised that this would have been a difficult task given the lack of overall objectives for the portfolio. Similarly, the Sports Development Officer commented that it was unlikely that any such tasks would be undertaken as there would be no-one with overall responsibility for the portfolio with the Senior Architectural Assistant's role coming to an end and the Education Property Services Manager not having any ongoing involvement.

In terms of other sources of post-opening support for NOPES projects generally, the Sports Development Manager hoped that the schools chosen to be part of the portfolio were already linked into other mutually supportive programmes and structures. However, one Partnership Development Manager was largely unaware of the NOPES programme and specific projects in the schools covered by her SSP. She described a general lack of communication from the local authority regarding the development of sports

facilities in schools and, therefore, the SSP had not been able to provide adequate support to similar facilities projects in the past. Similarly, the SAZ Director and interviewees from the Sport Strategy & Contract Units were not fully aware of all the projects that made up the NOPES portfolio. Although the Sports Development Manager was aware of all the NOPES projects, she foresaw providing support to schools with smaller facilities only if they specifically requested it.

Irving Special School

Key partners in the NOPES project at Irving Special School had different visions regarding the long-term development of the project. As part of his role in programming the usage of the NOPES facility beyond the school day, the Disability Sports Development Officer was intending to provide access to the facility to mainstream sports clubs. The Disability Sports Development Officer described how the resource provided by the NOPES facility enabled him to steer the development of mainstream clubs:

> *It's given me the opportunity to force a mainstream club by saying "I'm giving you a venue but you've got to do some work with disabled people now", which from my point of view as disability officer is fantastic.*

This approach fitted with the general development of disability sport in Lonborough which focused on integrating people with a disability into mainstream provision.

Conversely, Irving Special School's Bursar, who had been the key driver of the project within the school, envisaged the NOPES facility becoming a 'sports centre for disabled people'. This vision was based on an alternative conception of equity to that of the Disability Sports Development Officer, one based on provision of specific opportunities and facilities for people with a disability to balance the inappropriate mainstream provision that, the Bursar believed, was currently available to this group. The Bursar implicitly

recognised the tensions between the two visions for the usage of the NOPES facility beyond the school day and suggested that, in the longer term, the school might consider taking more control over the management of community use in order to realise their aims.

In the short-term, however, there was agreement between the school and the Disability Sports Development Officer regarding the practical arrangements for managing use of the NOPES facility beyond the school day. These arrangements were based on a joint understanding that the school lacked the capacity to provide staff to open the NOPES facility beyond the school day and the Disability Sports Development Officer did not have the remit to do so. As a result, clubs who were invited to use the facility were to gain access for an entire evening and were to be responsible, on a 'trust basis', for opening, locking and maintaining the facility during their allocated period.

Compared to the implicit tensions between the school and the Disability Sports Development Officer regarding the proposed usage of the NOPES facility beyond the school day, the school was solely responsible for planning curricular and extra-curricular usage. For example, suggested developments prompted by availability of the NOPES facility, such as providing double rather than single periods of PE, were to be decided and enacted entirely by school staff. Both the school's Bursar and PE Co-ordinator did, however, recognise it was commonly through amalgamation of the resource provided by the NOPES facility and external resources from, for example, the SSP that desired outcomes for school sport would be achieved.

Jackson Primary School

There were no formal policies or plans for the development of the NOPES project at Jackson Primary School. Within the school, the new facility was anticipated to support the ongoing development of PE and school sport. Four PE qualified staff had been appointed within the school since the

inception of the project and access to the NOPES facility was expected to allow improved teaching of PE. Furthermore, in extra-curricular time, the Deputy Head Teacher suggested that the NOPES facility allowed ‘scope for many more things going on at the same time’.

Similarly, usage of the NOPES facility beyond the school day was expected to ‘evolve’ and grow ‘organically’ rather than as part of a strategic plan (Deputy Head Teacher). The Deputy Head Teacher also suggested that an initial phase of consultation was required to ensure that the provision beyond the school day matched the needs of the local community.

Kaplan Park

Interviewees commented on potential issues regarding the post-opening management and development of the NOPES facilities in Kaplan Park. Although it was anticipated that there would be few problems generating usage of the facility, the Community Service Project Officer believed it was a ‘challenge’ to ensure that members of the target groups identified in the initial objectives for the project became users of the facility. Similarly, the SAZ Director was concerned that, based on experience at other facilities operated by the not-for-profit trust, groups that the SAZ worked with would face barriers to accessing the new facility at Kaplan Park.

The Community Services Project Officer viewed the contract between Lonborough Council and the leisure trust as being important in ensuring that the more socially-orientated objectives of the project were met. The Strategic Development Manager for Sport stated that the contract would include requirements that the non-for-profit trust were to meet but he also believed that delivery of outcomes also required a level of ‘goodwill’. As part of the contract, a number of schools were to receive guaranteed, free access at certain times. The Strategic Development Manager for Sport commented that free use by schools was ‘a bit of a problem’ that would ensure that

we have got to sweat the facility at other times, evening and weekend use. It has got to generate a commercial revenue to justify the free use, which will be a challenge.

He suggested that at all leisure facilities there was a tension between maximising income and ensuring that access was available to all sections of the community in order to meet local and national objectives. One particular type of organisation that could have been affected by pricing structures for community use was the netball clubs that had formerly been charged nominal fees to use the tarmac area that previously existed in the park. Officers from the SDT were to provide significant input into netball development in the park if pricing structures were suitable.

8.5 Discussion and Conclusions

The final section of this chapter will comprise of two sections which correspond to the two research questions of the overall study. Within each section, key themes from across the case study will be identified and drawn together. The first section will examine the form of partnerships and collaboration connected to the NOPES programme in Lonborough. The second section will consider the effect of these forms of partnership and collaboration on the policy process and outputs within the NOPES programme.

8.5.1 Partnership and collaborative forms

The context of PE, school and community sport in Lonborough affected the forms of partnership and collaboration identified in the NOPES programme and more generally. Key stakeholders from both the education and sport sectors worked in a changing organisational context within the local authority. Furthermore, the priority given to sport within these wider organisational contexts could be described as fluid and uncertain. Agencies with a role in PE, school and community sport, such as the SSPs and the SAZ, were also instigated and expanded during the period of this study and

there was evidence of some lack of continuity in both positions within key agencies in Lonborough, notably that of the PE Advisor and Senior School Advisor, and also the personnel employed in other positions.

In this context, it was perhaps unsurprising that there were no formal or overarching partnership structures related to PE, school and community sport across the whole of Lonborough. Instead, while there were strong bonds between some key stakeholders, other relationships were fractious. Similar factors enhanced some relationships and caused tension in others. For example, the collaboration between the SDT, SSPs and SAZ was enhanced by, what interviewees believed, was a shared ethos whilst differences in approaches inhibited links being developed with the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit. Similarly, the presence or absence of trust between these same agencies contributed to a context that, respectively, supported or inhibited collaborative working.

The major features of this collaborative context serve to improve understanding of the membership and operation of the NOPES steering group in Lonborough, as well as its links with other agencies. The steering group was notable for its small number of members. The composition of the steering group appeared to be based on including members who provided sufficient capabilities to manage the NOPES programme in Lonborough. Other stakeholders in PE, school and community sport were not included in the steering group, either at the outset of the NOPES programme or, in the case of the SSPs and the SAZ, when they became more established in Lonborough. As with its membership, the operational approach of the steering group could also be described as functional in undertaking the necessary management tasks.

It could be hypothesised that the membership and operational approach of the steering group was also linked to the agencies that had key leadership roles within it. Although there were changes in the particular individuals, the steering group was always chaired by staff involved in the management of education buildings. For these staff, NOPES was solely a facility programme

which reached completion at the end of construction. NOPES was also only one of a number of education-based capital programmes in Lonborough. As such, the leadership of the NOPES programme by these individuals could account for the functional approach taken by the steering group.

The position and role of the Senior Architectural Assistant from Const Education may also have contributed to the approach taken by the steering group. Within the steering group, there was a clear division in roles between this individual and the Community Projects Service Manager in managing specific NOPES projects. Again coming from a construction background, the Senior Architectural Assistant was responsible for managing the process of application and construction of all the school based projects. As an external contractor, working for a private sector company, the role of the Senior Architectural Assistant appeared to be contractually defined to undertaking specific tasks rather than having any wider developmental role. Given this, it was interesting that a number of interviewees welcomed the fact that, throughout her appointment, the Senior Architectural Assistant offered a single, continuous point of contact both for schools with NOPES projects and members of the steering group. It was likely that this intermediary role taken by the Senior Architectural Assistant actually inhibited the development of direct relationships between schools and the steering group. With the Senior Architectural Assistant having a time-limited contract for involvement in the NOPES programme, Ranade & Hudson's (2003) warning of the danger of removal of boundary spanners is certainly applicable in this case.

Subsequent to the disengagement of the Senior School Advisor (whose role nominally encompassed PE and school sport), the Sports Development Manager was the only member of the steering group whose role focused on any aspect of service delivery. As a result, the position of the SDT and Manager in the NOPES programme and within the broader context of sport in Lonborough is of interest. The Sports Development Manager did not appear to have a clearly defined role within the steering group and, after the selection of NOPES projects, her role could be described as somewhat

marginal. However, the Sports Development Manager's membership of the steering group represented its only link with wider networks involved in PE, school and community sport. The SDT generally had an ethos that welcomed collaboration in the delivery of services and was especially integrated into a close, informal network involved in school sport that also included the two SSPs in Lonborough as well as the SAZ. Indeed, these agencies could be regarded as forming the main, though not only, network involved in the development of sport in Lonborough. The primary focus of this network was collaboration in the delivery of school sport programmes rather than having a role in the development of a strategic approach to school sport more generally.

It was reported that the high levels of communication within this network brought its members a good appreciation of the work of the other agencies. However, other than the Sports Development Manager, members of this network did not appear to have a detailed knowledge of the projects that comprised the NOPES portfolio in Lonborough. Again, the disengagement of the Senior Schools Advisor from the NOPES programme, and school sport more generally, could have contributed to the lack of awareness of the NOPES portfolio amongst the two Partnership Development Managers in Lonborough. Furthermore, the absence of an individual within the Education Department with a specialist role for PE and school sport meant that there was no overall strategic approach to the issue across Lonborough and also impeded communication about specific education-based programmes. The Partnership Development Managers' understanding of, and role in, the NOPES programme matched these more general trends.

Different partnership arrangements were in place, and proposed, at each of the NOPES projects considered as part of this case study. This reflected the lack of consideration and direction given by the portfolio steering group to the management of NOPES facilities post-opening. Another reason for these differences in partnership arrangements was the diversity of types of project selected for the NOPES portfolio. As Marsh & Smith (2000) suggest in their dialectical model of policy networks, this analysis demonstrates the

potential influence of NOPES policy decisions on subsequent partnership arrangements within the programme.

No formal partnership arrangements were in place for the NOPES project at Irving Special School although the relationship between the school and the Disability Sports Development Officer (part of the SDT) was to be crucial to the management of community use of the new facility. As a significant extension to the existing relationship between these parties, the informal relationship in place was described as a 'leap of faith' by the school's Bursar. This comment has strong similarities to the challenges at the start of the trust building process described by Huxham & Vangen (2005) in their work on collaborative advantage. However, the school was becoming increasingly integrated into the local network consisting of Sports Development and SSP staff and through this network links with other organisations including a charitable funding agency and sports clubs were expected to develop.

There was also no formal partnership for the NOPES project at Jackson Primary School although for different reasons to those at Irving Special School. As a small NOPES facility, staff from the school believed that they had sufficient resources within the school to manage the development of the project as they wished. Support for this development was anticipated from networks that the Head Teacher, as an individual, was a member of. Agencies, such as the local SSP, that were part of more established networks in Lonborough, also provided support for the general development of PE and sport in the school.

The project at Kaplan Park was the only one of the three for which there was definitely to be a dedicated partnership group. The instigation of this partnership group was stated to be a term of the contract with the not-for-profit trust that was to manage the facility once it was open. The contract was to be overseen by the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit. Despite the apparent increasing importance of the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit in Lonborough, this was the only NOPES project in which this unit had

significant involvement. The reasons for this were not entirely clear, although it could be attributed to the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit not being included in the main network for the delivery of school sport in Lonborough and the lack of a joint strategic approach with the Education Department for the development of sports facilities. Furthermore, at this project, there was evidence that agencies such as the SDT and the SAZ, who were both integrated into the main delivery network in Lonborough, had limited trust in the not-for-profit trust that was to manage the facility.

8.5.2 Effect of Partnership and Collaboration on Policy Process and Outputs

There was no overall strategy for either PE, school and community sport or sports facility development in Lonborough. The lack of an overall strategy was connected to the lack of joint consideration of strategic issues by all the key stakeholders in sport in the area. The lack of an integrated strategy certainly contributed to there being no singular vision or aim for the NOPES programme in Lonborough. This lacuna could also be partially attributed to the functional approach taken by the NOPES steering group.

Demonstrated both by the final composition of the NOPES portfolio and interviewee data, the lack of a wider sports strategy and overall vision for the programme itself ensured that the process of selection of NOPES projects was largely pragmatic. There was also evidence that interest groups, primarily schools, had a significant influence on the selection process. The result of this selection process was a portfolio that encompassed a variety of types and sizes of project located at primary and secondary schools as well as in local parks.

After the selection of projects, the steering group became primarily concerned with operational management of the NOPES portfolio. The steering group made reactive decisions to alter the composition of the NOPES portfolio but was mainly concerned with overseeing the progress that members of the group made in advancing projects through application

and construction phases. Once these phases were complete the steering group was to be discontinued. Although the possibility of a continued role for the steering group was identified in interviews by members whose roles were more orientated to service delivery, individuals with responsibility for leading the group were clear their involvement would cease once construction of facilities was complete and the issue of a continued role for the steering did not appear to have been discussed between different group members. Thus, the discontinuation of the steering group could be seen as an example of a non-decision with other options either explicitly or implicitly excluded from discussion by individuals with a leadership role in the steering group. Given this non-decision, school-based projects were only likely to receive support post-opening if the schools at which they were located were already integrated into existing networks and proactively requested support through them.

Although there were superficial differences between policy issues at the different NOPES projects included in the case study, there were similarities in the relationship between these issues and the project-level partnerships[9]. Staff at Irving Special School shared an aim with their key partner, the Disability Sports Development Officer, to improve the sporting opportunities available to people with a disability. However, they differed in views on how this was to be achieved, either through developing specific opportunities or integrating disabled people into mainstream provision. It was recognised that the tension between these different approaches had the potential to present challenges for development of the project and the partnership itself. Similarly, there were tensions between stakeholders in the Kaplan Park project. These tensions concerned the aims of the project to a greater extent than at Irving Special School and could also be considered as demonstrative of how the ethos of the SAZ and the SDT differed from that of the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit. The former agencies hoped that the project achieved more developmental and socially-orientated outcomes while staff from the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit emphasised the need

[9] It should be recognised that given the timescale of these projects, data was only gathered pre-opening and so the analysis of policy issues is somewhat hypothetical.

for the project to be economically effective and efficient. Finding a compromise between these two positions would be a challenge especially given the large number of stakeholders in the project. In contrast, the lack of external stakeholders in the Jackson Primary School project meant that there was unlikely to be any challenges to the way in which school staff chose to develop this project.

Chapter Nine: Discussion and Conclusions

9.1 Introduction

The individual contributions of the previous chapters are brought together in this final chapter of the thesis. The first two sections of the chapter bring together the empirical findings from the three case studies to answer the two research questions identified in the introductory chapter. Cross-case analysis of the findings from the three case studies in these sections is supported by theoretical concepts identified in Chapter Three. The third section of the chapter examines the implications of these findings for more general understanding of partnership and collaboration. In doing so, subsections will consider the links between partnership, governance and governmentality; the relationship between partnership and collaboration; and the effect of these types of arrangements. Subsequently, in the fourth section, implications of the findings for theoretical development and future research will be presented. This fourth section will begin with an examination of the utility and possible refinement of general analytic concepts and specific theories, especially policy networks, for the study of partnership and collaboration. Issues and potential avenues for future research will follow from this theoretical consideration. The concluding section of the chapter will provide a brief summary of important issues arising from the study as a whole.

9.2 Partnership and Collaborative Forms

The purpose of this section is to examine the answer to the first research question, namely:

> **What forms of local partnership and collaboration are developed for, and connected to, the New Opportunities for PE and Sport programme?**

In doing so, the section will first examine the forms of partnership and collaboration that existed in the context of the New Opportunities for PE and Sport (NOPES) programme in the three case studies. This will be followed by a comparison of the partnerships identified at portfolio-level in each of the three case studies for the NOPES programme. These in turn will be compared to the aspirations held by the Fund and governmental stakeholders for the form and membership of these NOPES partnerships. Consideration will then be given to important issues identified within the NOPES partnerships. Finally, the forms of partnership and collaboration found at individual NOPES projects will be compared and how these relate to the contexts described previously will be examined.

9.2.1 Comparison of the Three Case Studies

Understanding the collaborative context of the NOPES programme is vital to exploring and explaining partnerships developed specifically for the NOPES programme in the case study areas. The descriptions of the collaborative context in each of the case studies in the previous three chapters will be enhanced by using theoretical concepts identified in Chapter Three to analyse and compare the forms of partnership and collaboration identified. Due to the definitional flexibility of the concept, policy networks offer a useful tool in undertaking such an analysis. The typology for classifying policy networks provided by Marsh & Rhodes (1992) is particularly useful.

Regime theory was the other concept identified in Chapter Three as having potential utility in examining forms of local partnership and collaboration. From the evidence presented in the previous three chapters, the identification of the existence of a regime in the context of the NOPES programme in any of the case studies would be an example of both concept and evidence stretching. First of all, it has not been claimed that the evidence regarding the collaborative context in each case enabled an exhaustive description of the entire context of PE, school and community sport. Rather the relationships between key agencies *in the context of the NOPES programme* in each case were described. Even if an exhaustive

description was offered, PE, school and community sport did not have sufficient profile in any of the cases to be a common policy agenda for drawing together the variety of stakeholders required to form a regime across an entire local authority area. Notwithstanding these strong reasons, in each individual case there were reasons why the collaborative forms would fail the tests provided by Mossberger & Stoker's (2001) identification of properties of regimes. For example, there was no pattern of longstanding cooperation in Lonborough (property 4). The involvement and influence of business could also be questioned in each case.

However, this argument against the identification of regimes in the case studies does not automatically preclude regime theory from having analytical utility in this study. Of particular relevance to this section are the typologies of regimes described by both Mossberger & Stoker (1994) and Stone (1993). Many of the differentiating characteristics identified in these typologies are similar to those in Marsh & Rhodes' (1992) typology of policy networks. However, in addition to Marsh & Rhodes' typology, the typologies of regimes include 'purpose' as a defining characteristic. For this reason, 'purpose' is included in Table 4 overleaf in which the characteristics of the collaborative context in each of the three case studies are compared.

It is not the intention to duplicate the descriptions given in the preceding chapters of the collaborative context in each of the three case studies. Instead, a comparison between the collaborative contexts in the three case studies is offered, structured by the differentiating characteristics identified in the typologies of policy networks and, to the extent described above, regimes. Generally, however, it must be noted that there were significant differences in the collaborative context in each case. Highlighting these differences, each case has been labelled accordingly. The context in the case of Northtown has been termed an 'integrated community', in Midcity the title 'resource exchange network' has been applied and finally, in the case encompassing the most diversity, Lonborough, the term 'fragmented networks' most accurately captures the collaborative context of the NOPES programme.

Table 4: Defining Characteristics of Collaborative Forms

Dimension	**Northtown**	**Midcity**	**Lonborough**
General Classification	**Integrated Community**	**Resource exchange network**	**Fragmented networks**
Membership			
Number of Participants	Two key organisations encompassing a large number of individuals	Various organisations involved to differing extents	Larger number of organisations
Type of interest	Primarily public sector	Primarily public sector but some quango and voluntary sector involvement	Agencies included sections of the local authority, the not-for-profit sector and school-based organisations
Integration			
Frequency of interaction	Interaction through formalised structures and informal relationships	No formalised structures for interaction. Some close relationships between individuals	Personal relationships predominated. Limited formal interaction except on specific issues
Continuity	Long-standing relationships developed over time	Ongoing changes in relationships between organisations	Ongoing changes in context, organisations and individuals
Consensus	Common aims around contribution of sport to health and well-being	Variable but some shifting of priorities to ensure compatibility of aims	Some agencies shared similar aims and ethos. Differences created tensions between others
Resources			
Distribution of resources (in network)	Internal and external resources available to network as a whole	Most agencies reliant on acquisition of external funds	Some shifting of balance of resources towards particular agencies.
Internal Distribution	Public sector provides ‘strategic lead’. Individuals have network skills.	PE and sport low priorities within local authority – little influence on wider structures	Lack of overall strategic leadership. Sport peripheral to local authority and education
Power	Education higher profile than sport	PE and sport valued for contribution to other, higher profile priorities	Exercise of power created and exacerbated tensions between agencies
Purpose/ Rationale	Valued mechanism for mutual benefit through co-ordinated strategy and delivery	Resource exchange – funding in return for service contribution to other agencies’ agendas	Avoidance of duplication, joint and co-ordinated delivery (where relationships allowed)

In terms of membership, it must be recognised that identifying the precise boundaries of any network is always problematical. This challenge is magnified in this study as, rather than necessarily identifying an entire network, it was the collaborative context of the NOPES programme that was examined. The adoption of a snowball sampling mechanism also had implications for clearly demarcating the boundaries of the collaborative context in each case. However, in Northtown, the membership of the PE and School Sport Strategic Forum and analysis of interviewee data demonstrated that the large number of key individuals in the context of the NOPES programme were drawn from two public-sector agencies: Education Northtown and the Sport & Active Recreation Section of Northtown City Council. Besides similar agencies being key stakeholders in Midcity, a sport and education project, outwith the local authority itself, obviously had an important role in the context of the NOPES programme. Health agencies and the racial equality and sport project, from the voluntary sector, were also integrated into the collaborative context to varying extents. Of the three cases, Lonborough had the greatest variety of agencies identified as stakeholders in the collaborative context of the NOPES programme. These agencies were not only drawn from the local authority but also from the not-for-profit sector and, in the case of one SSP, located within an independent, publicly-funded school.

As with membership, differences were identified in the integration between individuals and agencies in the collaborative context in each case. At this stage, it should be noted that within the integration category of Marsh & Rhodes' (1992) typology, the differentiating characteristic of 'frequency of interaction' has been liberally interpreted in this analysis to include the mechanisms and forms of interaction. In Northtown, integration between agencies was longstanding, based on a shared understanding of the contribution of sport to health and wellbeing. Increasingly interaction between agencies took place within formal structures. There were no similar overarching formalised structures in either of the other two cases.

Conversely, in both Midcity and Lonborough, there were close, informal working relationships between some of the key individuals in the collaborative context. However, these relationships existed in a changing context, in terms of organisational structures and individual stakeholders in Lonborough and in terms of the priority given to key alliances between different agencies in Midcity. Similarly, these two cases differed in the extent that there was consensus between agencies. In Midcity, there was evidence that the Sports Services Section was prepared to change its priorities in order that they would be compatible with key funding partners. In Lonborough, the degree of compatibility of aims and ethos supported the integration of some agencies whilst exacerbating tensions between others.

As they were intimately connected, the categories of resources and power shall be considered together. In Northtown, there appeared to be a willingness by agencies to commit both internal and external resources to the 'integrated community' despite there being recognition that education had a higher profile and budget than that of sport. In Midcity, there was reliance on the part of the Sports Services Section to acquire external resources, including those from education, which meant that sport was primarily valued for its contribution to the objectives of the respective agencies providing funding. The growing resources controlled by the Sports Strategy & Contracts Unit in Lonborough appeared to make this agency more powerful and, in turn, the exercise of this power created divisions with other agencies. A final difference was that there appeared to be sufficient power and resources within the integrated community of public sector organisations in Northtown to provide strategic direction for sport whereas, in the two other cases, the peripheral nature of sport impeded the development of a wider strategic approach to sport.

The perceived purpose of partnership and collaboration in each case was linked both with the other characteristics identified and with the literature on modes of co-ordination. In Northtown, partnership was valued for the benefit it could bring to integration of strategy and co-ordination of delivery. This purpose and other facets of the 'integrated community' very much fitted with

a network mode of co-ordination. Conversely, the mode of co-ordination in Midcity was more market orientated with partnership being recognised as a mechanism through which financial resources were acquired in return for a contribution to other agencies' agendas. As an example of one characteristic in Powell's (1991) comparison of types of co-ordination, there was a high level of commitment between agencies in Northtown concomitant with a network mode compared to the shifting alliances associated with market relationships identified in Midcity. Lonborough presented a different case entirely in which there was not any consistent co-ordination across the context of PE, school and community sport although the relationship between the Sports Development Team, the School Sport Partnerships and the Sports Action Zone could, in isolation, be related to a network through which duplication was avoided and services were co-ordinated and jointly delivered.

The partnerships for the NOPES programme at portfolio-level in each case study can be analysed and compared in relation to the features of the respective collaborative contexts identified above. The membership of NOPES partnerships bore strong resemblance to the composition of networks in the wider collaborative context in both Northtown and Midcity. In each of these cases, the key agencies and individuals in the collaborative context formed the core of the NOPES partnerships. The individual, sport-based members of these NOPES partnerships were those who had overall responsibility for PE, school and community sport in each case study. Agencies with a role in facility construction were added to these partnerships because of their particular expertise. Conversely, in Lonborough, only the involvement of the Sports Development Manager and, in the early stages, the Senior School Advisor in the NOPES partnership provided a link with the large number of stakeholders involved in PE, school and community sport. Instead, individuals with a facility construction background and role were more prominent and held key positions in the NOPES partnership group.

The integration between members of the NOPES partnerships also reflected their composition and their relationship to the wider collaborative context. Despite changes in the level of formality of the NOPES partnership in Northtown, there appeared to be a high level of ongoing interaction and communication within the NOPES partnership, aided by the Portfolio Manager. In Midcity, the strong relationship between the PE & Sport Strategic Manager and the Head of Sport was reflected in their forming the core of the NOPES partnership group whilst other agencies were more peripheral or involved mainly to undertake specific tasks. The members that comprised the NOPES partnership in Lonborough had little prior experience of working together and there were identifiable divisions within the group between those members involved in school- and parks-based projects respectively as well as between those members involved in facility construction and service delivery (who had a more peripheral input once the NOPES portfolio had been selected).

As the primary resource held by the NOPES partnerships was the allocation of NOPES funding from the Fund, there is little comment to be made on the division of financial resources. The issue of human resources within NOPES partnerships will be considered later in this section when the role of Portfolio Managers will be discussed. In terms of power, the influence of the Education Department in Lonborough, as the lead organisation for NOPES, was particularly evident, whereas in Northtown, with its more integrated network, differentials of power according to the leadership of the NOPES partnership were less apparent.

Finally, there were differences in terms of the identified purpose of partnerships in the NOPES programme in each case. As in the wider integrated community in Northtown, partnerships in the NOPES programme were identified by key stakeholders as being fundamental to achievement of the desired outcomes for the NOPES programme. In both Midcity and Lonborough, where an ethos of integrated collaboration was not so ingrained, NOPES partnerships had a more functional role in ensuring progress in the application for, and construction of, NOPES facilities and

ensuring that there was accountability for decisions taken regarding the NOPES programme. Generally, it should be recognised that it was often difficult to differentiate between the purpose of NOPES partnerships and the policy processes within them. In fact, it may have been that decisions on partnership purpose were the first part of the policy process in some cases. How these different purposes related to differences in policy process and outputs will be considered more fully in the next section.

The preceding analysis does raise some interesting issues that require further consideration. Particularly in Northtown and, to a slightly lesser extent in Midcity, the NOPES partnerships strongly reflected the characteristics of the collaborative context in each case. The greater degree of divergence between the NOPES partnership and the networks in the collaborative context in Lonborough is perhaps more interesting and requires further explanation. A number of individuals and agencies with a role in the provision of school and community sport in Lonborough were not included in the NOPES partnership at the outset of the programme or, as their profile increased, during the period of this study. Rather than this representing a deliberate exclusion of particular agencies, it may have been that the lack of a single, integrated network concerned with PE, school and community sport in Lonborough made the identification of all relevant stakeholders and their integration into the NOPES partnership difficult.

Two other potential reasons for the degree of divergence between the NOPES partnership and networks in the collaborative context in Lonborough were identified. Firstly, there was a significant difference between the focus of the key network concerned with school sport in Lonborough and the NOPES partnership. The focus of the integrated network consisting of the Sports Development Team, the School Sport Partnerships and the Sports Action Zone was mainly on the delivery of school-based sporting opportunities. This focus was not compatible with the NOPES partnership in which there was limited consideration of issues, such as delivery of opportunities, that would arise after the opening of NOPES facilities. Secondly, the leadership of the NOPES partnership by staff whose roles

were in capital asset management may not have encouraged strong links with the sport-based collaborative context and could have also contributed to the low profile of individuals with sport-focused roles within the partnership itself. At a broader level, the fact that capital asset management staff were chosen to lead the NOPES partnership could be considered to reflect the lack of profile of sport in Lonborough.

9.2.2 Comparison of National Expectations and Local Partnerships

How the form and membership of NOPES partnerships related to the original aspirations of the Fund and other governmental stakeholders is also of interest. The overall analysis of this issue can be subdivided into a number of themes: the extent to which national stakeholders' analysis of local contexts prior to NOPES was accurate, the precision of aspirations for NOPES partnerships and the utility of the tools available to the Fund to achieve these aspirations. Before examining these themes, it is worthwhile to note the significant degree to which a normative commitment to partnership was central to Fund's ethos. The link between promotion of this ethos and the concept of governmentality will be examined further in Section 9.4.1.

At the time that the NOPES programme was initiated, the extent to which national stakeholders had an accurate understanding of local contexts was mixed. The Fund's Policy Advisor was particularly explicit in identifying his own lack of knowledge of processes within local authorities. However, the analysis that sport was not a high profile issue for a number of local authorities and, connected to this, that a proportion of local authorities did not have the capacity to effectively develop NOPES partnerships certainly had resonance in Lonborough and, to a lesser extent, in Midcity. Alternatively, Northtown provided the exception to this analysis and also to the more universal charge that departmental boundaries within local authorities remained strong. Another example of the limitations of national stakeholders' understanding of the local context was demonstrated by the stated expectation that, despite the supposed low profile for sport in local

authorities, Local Strategic Partnerships were to be strongly involved in the NOPES programme at a local level. In practice, in none of the three case studies did the Local Strategic Partnership have any direct involvement in the NOPES programme.

Besides Local Strategic Partnerships, a number of potential members of NOPES partnerships were identified by the Fund that represented a range of agencies from national to sub-local level. The form of partnerships expected was less well defined. However, there was a general concern from national stakeholders as to the extent to which these aspects of partnership should be prescribed nationally or, conversely, local ownership of the NOPES programme should be encouraged. There was also some uncertainty as to the degree of intervention the Fund, as a non-departmental public body, could and should have into the operation of local authorities. As a result of these issues, the Fund generally promoted the concept of partnerships within the NOPES programme rather than providing specific guidance as to the form and operation of partnership arrangements.

Nevertheless, the Fund did have tools available to it through which it could steer and influence local NOPES partnerships. Primarily, with regard to NOPES partnerships, these tools were the funding that was being made available and the assessment process that local NOPES partnerships were to undertake to access this funding. However, these tools appeared to be somewhat blunt instruments when used to direct the intricacies of local NOPES partnerships. For example, the assessment criterion that ‘partners would participate on an equal basis’ did not appear to be applied by the Fund. How this criterion could practically be applied also remains unclear. Rather, assessment mainly consisted of consideration of which individuals and agencies were named as members of NOPES partnership in application documents. Therefore, in Midcity for example, the NOPES partnership group included ‘all the partners that we were asked to engage by the New Opportunities Fund’ (PE & Sport Strategic Manager) although a number of partners were not demonstrably included on an equal basis and, in fact, disengaged from the partnership over time. Furthermore, in all three case

studies, the NOPES partnerships did not include representatives of national agencies while sub-local agencies only had a marginal input at portfolio level, if at all.

The point made in the last paragraph regarding the disengagement of partnership members also emphasises the inherent limitations of steering tools that could only be applied at the outset of partnerships. With regard to this issue, NOPES partnerships were a reflection of the existing collaborative context in each case studied rather than representing a realisation of national stakeholders' longer-term aspiration that NOPES would provide a catalyst to wider partnership working. At least at portfolio level, this aspiration appeared somewhat unrealistic. That is not to say that this, or other, aspirations were not met in other local authorities not included in this study but the evidence from the case studies certainly demonstrates that national stakeholders aspirations for partnerships were not universally met.

9.2.3 Partnership and Collaboration Processes

The analysis presented thus far in this section has primarily been concerned with partnership structures rather than their internal facets and processes. This division reflects one difference between literature on policy networks and regimes and the literature related to the concepts of collaborative advantage and capacity. The nature of the study and the methodology adopted makes identification of processes that are prominent in the collaborative advantage literature, such as trust building and the development of shared aims, problematic[10]. One issue that is prominent in the collaborative advantage literature that the data collected in this study can be used to illuminate is the availability (or otherwise) of individual capacity, skills and leadership to enhance collaborative processes.

[10] As opposed to the outcomes of such processes, namely the existence of trust and shared aims between different agencies.

The appointed Portfolio Managers were key individuals in the NOPES programme in each of the case studies. It was identified in the case study chapters that, whereas the role of the Portfolio Manager in Northtown was identified as one of developing collaboration within the portfolio as a whole (a 'reticulist' or 'boundary spanner' role, as termed in the literature), the individuals employed in similar roles in Midcity and Lonborough had more task-orientated, operational roles. In these roles, the Portfolio Managers acted more as a 'buffer' between the portfolio-level NOPES partnership and individual projects. Rather than elaborating further on these roles, which are covered more fully in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight, what is of more interest at this point is to consider why there were the identified differences in the roles of the Portfolio Managers.

To differing extents, the employment of Portfolio Managers represented normal practice or was an outcome of previous experience in each of the case studies. Whereas the Portfolio Manager in Northtown was appointed within the local authority, the individuals in the same positions in Lonborough and Midcity were employed within external organisations in the private sector and in a quango respectively. The relationship between these two Portfolio Managers' organisations and the respective local authorities was, despite their different organisational status and differing degrees of formality, one of client-contractor one. It could be speculated that the need for clearly defined tasks or outputs in such a relationship inhibited the possibility of these two Portfolio Managers adopting the more nebulous role of enhancing partnership working. Furthermore, the extent to which these Portfolio Managers, representing external agencies, could encourage changes in practices within the respective local authorities that they were contracted to could also be questioned. Conversely, in Northtown, the 'boundary spanner' role of the Portfolio Manager may represent a more proactive decision on behalf of the NOPES partnership based on the greater value attached to collaboration and a commitment to allocate resources to such practices. The employment of trusted, external consultants in Northtown and their role in developing collaboration can also be viewed in this light.

9.2.4 Project-Level Partnership and Collaboration

Although partnership and collaboration at portfolio-level was the primary focus of this study, the data from individual NOPES projects highlighted a number of interesting issues as well as allowing analysis of the links between portfolio- and project-level. As stated in Chapter Four, Yin (2003) suggests that the 'embedded cases' of projects should be integrated into each case study prior to cross-case analysis. This recommendation has been followed with analysis of projects in each case brought together in each of the three previous chapters. What these analyses showed was that, while there were similarities in project-level partnership and collaboration, there were also significant differences within each case. However, as shall be demonstrated, the cross-case analysis provided further insight into the issues identified in each case.

The first issue to be considered is the existence, or otherwise, of formal partnerships at individual NOPES projects. Only in one case study, Northtown, were there formal partnership groups at all of the projects studied. The existence of these groups very strongly fitted with the features of the collaborative context and the portfolio-level NOPES partnership in Northtown as described earlier in this section and in the case study chapter. Project-level partnership groups were included in the formal structure developed for the NOPES programme in Northtown, the Portfolio Manager invested time into supporting the instigation of these groups and local authority staff, from the organisational hierarchies that were the responsibility of portfolio-level NOPES partnership members, were included in the project-level partnership groups. More generally, the project-level partnership groups fitted with the general ethos within Northtown in which partnership was a valued and increasingly ingrained way of working.

In the two other case studies, not all projects had partnership groups in place. There was certainly not the same impetus from portfolio-level in Midcity and Lonborough for the formation of project partnership groups. The

projects with partnership groups in place, or at which they were anticipated, were typically those where more than one agency had a stake in the governance of the NOPES project[11]. The roles of these partnerships in the governance and management of the projects differed slightly from the role of the similar groups at projects in Northtown which were more concerned with the integration of resources to aid the development of the respective projects. This difference again reflects the alternative approaches to partnership and collaboration that was evident in Northtown compared to the other two case studies.

Due to the involvement of all schools in the national School Sport Partnership programme, all of the NOPES projects in the case studies were linked to wider networks which provided, primarily, human resources to support the development of school use of the NOPES facilities. Conversely, the NOPES facilities could be seen as additional resource to support achievement of SSP aims (Loughborough Partnership, 2005). Furthermore, the School Sport Partnerships were the conduit for links between NOPES projects and other agencies such as sports clubs. Overall, the project-level link between the NOPES projects and School Sport Partnerships could be considered to be enabled by the structural context while the actual relationships that were developed remained relatively informal.

There were greater differences between cases in the links between NOPES projects and sports agencies that were not part of the education functions of the local authorities. As alluded to above, the hierarchical aspect of the structure for NOPES in Northtown ensured that local sports development staff were involved in all the NOPES projects examined. This contrasted significantly with Midcity where staff from the Sports Services Section were only involved, or intervened, in individual NOPES projects where it was in their own strategic interest. Again, this fits with the independent capabilities of actors to make decisions within the market-based systems of co-ordination that were identified in Midcity (Powell, 1991). The smaller sample

[11] It should be noted that the partnership group at Cameron Community College was the exception to this trend.

of diverse projects examined as embedded units in Lonborough made it difficult to identify any clear pattern of involvement by agencies with a role in community sport.

The data do not support any analysis of the effectiveness of partnership and collaboration at individual NOPES projects. However, to a greater extent than at portfolio-level, what was more apparent at project-level was the differences between projects as to the degree that agencies found partnership and collaboration challenging. In turn, these differences were due in part to differences in the extent that partnership and collaboration was a normal, ingrained practice for these agencies. This links with a theme within the work on collaborative advantage by Huxham & Vangen (2005) which identifies the difficulty in initially entering cycles through which practices that underpin partnership and collaboration are then positively reinforced.

Also linking with the literature on collaborative advantage, another theme identified across projects in the three case studies was the need for agencies to have particular resources or capacities in order to engage effectively in partnership and collaboration. What Sullivan & Skelcher (2002) termed as collaborative capacity, was identified as comprising a number of different elements at individual NOPES projects. For example, in Northtown, the additional human resource provided by NOPES revenue-funded officers supported the development of collaborative links. Also in Northtown, different types of capital resource, in terms of the particular NOPES facility, and social resource, in terms of the presence of local sports clubs, affected the collaborative capacity of NOPES projects. Alternatively, in Midcity, the lack of specific skills and experience of management of community-use facilities in some schools impeded the development of collaboration with other agencies. A counter example from Lonborough was the perceived importance of head teacher's networking skills to the project at Jackson Primary School. These issues demonstrate the multi-faceted nature of collaborative capacity, a theme that will be highlighted further in the following sections.

9.3 Effect of Partnership and Collaboration on Policy Process and Outputs

Building on the preceding section, the content of this section is based upon the second of the research questions underpinning the study:

> **How do partnerships and collaborative arrangements influence the local policy process and outputs within the New Opportunities for PE and Sport programme?**

Although the effect of partnership and collaboration on policy processes and outputs was examined in each of the individual cases, the identification of cross-case similarities and differences in policy processes and outputs further enhances the overall understanding of partnership and collaboration. The policy process for NOPES in each local authority area can be broken down into three phases. Firstly, the selection of NOPES projects represented a key element of the policy process with the resultant NOPES portfolio being the output of this process. Individual projects then went through an application and construction process. Finally, the post-opening management and development of NOPES facilities and projects was the third phase of the policy process. This section will be structured around these three phases.

9.3.1 Initial Selection of Projects

In general, the NOPES partnerships in each of the three cases governed the process by which NOPES projects were selected. Cross-case analysis demonstrates a degree of similarity between the project selection process and resultant NOPES portfolios in Northtown and Midcity. The selection process in each of these case studies was dominated by the top-down influence of key stakeholders in the NOPES partnerships. As stated in the previous section, these key stakeholders were also those individuals with overall responsibility for PE, school and community sport in each case. In

both Northtown and Midcity, the selection of projects was described by members of these coalitions of key stakeholders as a balance between the dual priorities of school and community use. That neither of these elements dominated the selection of projects fitted with the lack of identifiable differentials in power held by core members within NOPES partnerships (rather than in the wider collaborative context).

One difference in the respective selection processes in Northtown and Midcity was the degree to which decisions were linked to existing strategies. In Northtown, the selection process was based on the strategic fit with existing sport policies in the local authority area. In terms of Marsh & Smith's (2000) dialectic model of policy networks, this represents the cycle in which previous policy outputs (made in the collaborative context) influence the wider structural context which in turn affects future policy decisions. The close relationship between the collaborative context and the NOPES partnership in Northtown enhanced the influence of these factors on NOPES processes. Alternatively, in Midcity, the lack of an overall strategy that encompassed PE, school and community sport ensured that the selection was based on an informal 'vision' created for the NOPES programme by the Head of Sport and PE & Sport Strategic Manager. Without a structural context that was as well defined by past policy decisions, the agents in the NOPES partnership were less constrained in the NOPES policy process in Midcity. It could be argued that the lack of a structural context defined by existing sports strategies was a result of the more independent, market-based approach within the wider collaborative context in Midcity.

This analysis of the process of selection in Northtown and Midcity demonstrates the largely identifiable influence of partnership members and the strategic context of PE, school and community sport on the selection of projects. However, similar features in the selection of projects in both these case studies demonstrated the influence of less visible structural features on the policy process. In both case studies, the possibility of external funding affected the selection of projects and, in Northtown, the influence of local political actors was also recognised. Through these elements, it may have

been that the interests of actors that were dominant in the wider local and national context were reproduced, to an extent, in the NOPES selection process.

More obviously, the top-down nature of the selection process in Northtown and Midcity was also tempered by soliciting of bottom-up applications from potential projects, the application of formal assessment criteria to these applications and the referral of decisions to other stakeholders for scrutiny. The comment made by the Corporate Initiatives Team Leader in Northtown that the selection process 'could not go ahead' by any other way is informative here. The need to involve schools in the selection process and subsequently justify decisions to those same schools is reflective of the ongoing structural weakening of the power and role of local authorities by central government. However, given the focus on the limited accountability of partnerships in the literature, it was interesting that NOPES partnership members intimated that the formal assessment criteria and scrutiny procedures merely provided a required degree of visible accountability rather than affecting the results of the decisions taken within the partnerships.

The differences in the collaborative context in Lonborough, compared to Northtown and Midcity, were reproduced in the variations identified in the process of project selection. As in both Northtown and Midcity, the wider collaborative context influenced the process of selection, but in Lonborough it was the lack of any wider strategy for sport that was replicated in the absence of an overall vision for the NOPES programme. Unlike Midcity, the fact that not all key sporting agencies were represented on the NOPES steering group also possibly contributed to a distinct vision for the NOPES programme not being developed. As a result, the selection of individual projects was based on pragmatic factors and also, interviewees intimated, on the lobbying skills of individual schools and their Head Teachers. This represents a more pluralistic and agency-based influence on the policy process in Lonborough than was present in Northtown or Midcity. Finally, it was reported that the need for school facilities was prioritised in the

selection process over the potential for community use of these facilities. This prioritisation reflected the domination of education-based stakeholders in the membership and leadership of the NOPES partnership in Lonborough.

9.3.2 Application, Design and Construction Processes

The application, design and construction phase of the NOPES programme was not a major focus of this study. In general, in all three case studies, this phase was one that required management of the required processes rather than a strategic approach. However, there were some identified differences in the processes enacted in the three case studies which are of interest. Key portfolio-level stakeholders in Northtown valued the consultation undertaken regarding individual projects in this phase and the employment of external leisure consultants demonstrated the perceived importance of plans written into projects' application documents. Alternatively, in Midcity, consultation regarding projects was described as 'lip service' and the writing of application documents was a 'tick box exercise' (Education Facilities Development Officer). These differences emphasise the contrast between the holistic, strategic approach to the NOPES programme taken in Northtown and the more minimalist, functional approach adopted in Midcity. Similarly, there was evidence that responsibility for undertaking tasks during this phase was shared throughout the NOPES partnership structure in Northtown whereas an approach based on delegation to individual employees was more prevalent in Midcity and Lonborough.

9.3.3 Post-opening of facilities

Responsibility for NOPES facilities after the construction was substantially devolved from the portfolio-level to individual projects in all three case studies. However, as in the previous phase of the NOPES programme, the degree and type of involvement of portfolio-level stakeholders after NOPES facilities opened provided interesting insights into partnership and collaboration.

Mirroring an approach taken by the Blair government in education nationally, the Portfolio Manager in Northtown intervened and provided support for specific projects in inverse proportion to the perceived capability of staff at these projects. Besides the input from the Portfolio Manager, members of the portfolio-level NOPES partnership also had tools to steer the NOPES projects through re-employing the external leisure consultants and having staff within their organisational hierarchies on project partnership groups. It was informative that while members of the portfolio-level NOPES partnership remained focused on achievement of the desired outcomes of the programme, their input was mainly concentrated on process issues at individual projects. Conversely, in Midcity, members of the NOPES partnership expressed disappointment that projects were not focused on the social outcomes that they hoped for the NOPES programme. However, from the perspective of some project staff, the market-orientated collaborative context meant their projects were in competition with other local authority owned-leisure facilities and as a result a focus on financial inputs and outputs was prevalent at project-level. The Portfolio Manager in this case had limited capacity to become involved in projects after NOPES facilities opened.

As with other issues included in this and the previous section, a different approach was identified in Lonborough to the other two case studies. Unlike in Northtown and Midcity, the portfolio-level NOPES partnership was discontinued after construction of facilities was completed. It was suggested in the case study chapter that the discontinuation of the NOPES partnership in this case may have represented a non-decision with the leaders of the partnership limiting any discussion of alternative courses of action amongst members. As well as the portfolio-level partnership being discontinued, other agencies that may have supported NOPES projects were unaware of the facilities that had been chosen and constructed. This lack of awareness was as a result of these stakeholders not being involved in the NOPES partnership was further compounded by the apparently limited communication about NOPES within the fragmented networks that existed in Lonborough. Overall, this portrait of post-opening involvement

demonstrates the implications of the different partnership and collaborative approaches in the three case study areas.

Finally, it is instructive to examine the similarities and differences in policy issues identified at NOPES projects. It has to be noted that these issues mainly concern the development of community use as usage of NOPES facilities by schools was relatively unproblematic, in particular for projects located at schools. Furthermore, it should be recognised that due to the timescale of this study, some of the issues identified were ones which were anticipated rather than experienced by project staff.

There was a large degree of similarity across projects in the three case studies as to the connections between collaboration, partnership and the policy process. Two issues were identified that are of particular importance. Firstly, the degree to which there was a harmonious policy development process, focused on the desired outcomes for projects, was related to the capacity of stakeholders in projects to work collaboratively. The example of Babcock High School in Northtown was the project where the strongest, positive relationship between these two features was identified. Conversely, it was apparent that at a number of projects in all three case studies where collaboration was more challenging, there was a greater focus on problematic financial issues that affected projects. Furthermore, at two projects in Lonborough where differences in the ethos and vision of key stakeholders were identified, it was anticipated that there could be tensions regarding the future development of these projects.

The second important issue identified at projects concerned the relationship between partnership and collaboration. This issue relates to the potential distinction between the two concepts identified in the literature review in Chapter Three. As suggested in the previous paragraph, the degree of harmonious collaboration was related to the existence of a common approach to the achievement of desired outcomes. The form of this collaboration was largely informal at a number of projects. However, within the formal partnership groups developed for projects in Northtown, the

resources of different agencies were combined collaboratively in order to deliver services that were anticipated to achieve desired outcomes. Alternatively, in Midcity and Lonborough, formal partnerships at projects had a narrower focus, in the initial post-opening period, primarily related to the governance of operational procedures. The relationship between partnership, collaboration, governance and policy processes will be one of a number of issues considered further in the following section which examines what the findings presented in this and the previous section may contribute to the broader understandings of partnership and collaboration.

9.4 Implications of Findings for Understanding of Partnership and Collaboration

Based on the empirical findings presented in the previous two sections and relating these more closely to the theoretical literature in Chapter Three, this section will examine the contribution of this study to the understanding of partnership and collaboration more generally. In doing so, implications for future policy will also be identified. The section will be structured around three particular issues. The first part of this section will examine how the findings of this study relate to the more general promotion of partnership and collaboration by central government in the United Kingdom. This analysis will significantly draw on the concepts of governmentality and governance. The second issue to be covered examines the relationship between partnership, collaboration, governance and social production. In doing so, a number of themes within the theoretical literature will be drawn together. Finally, the contribution of partnership and collaboration to policy processes and outputs will be considered. A number of the theories and concepts identified in Chapter Three are particularly relevant to this final issue.

9.4.1 Partnership, Governmentality and New Forms of Governance

Literature on governmentality provides valuable insights into the focus on partnership that exists at all levels of government in the United Kingdom. In particular, the distinction between political rationalities, governmental programmes and technologies, as termed by Rose & Miller (1992) amongst others, is highly instructive. The analysis of governmental policy in Chapter Two showed that the Blair government's focus on modernisation represented one of its core political rationalities. Underpinning this rationality was the government's analysis that previous ideological approaches had not worked, the apparatus of the state was outdated and that there was a need for 'joined up' government to address wicked issues (Prescott, 1998). Sport was one of the many policy sectors affected by this political rationality (Green & Houlihan, 2006). In terms of governable spaces, the analysis underpinning the modernisation rationality was viewed by the government to apply to all levels of the state from central government to local communities and agencies, for example schools.

The promotion of partnership can therefore be seen as a particular governmental programme that fits with this political rationality. Partnership was not the only governmental programme related to the rationality of modernisation, as the concurrent implementation of competition-based approaches in certain policy areas demonstrates. However, partnerships were to be new mechanisms to promote 'joined up' policy making and in doing so overcome boundaries between the public, private and voluntary sectors as well as between departmental silos in government. Partnership working was thus a form of conduct that the government wished to promote in a variety of spheres including local government and schools.

Given this analysis, initial questions for this study are to what extent has partnership been adopted as a 'normal' form of conduct at a local level in PE, school and community sport and in the particular context of the NOPES programme? A second, related question is whether 'partnership' arrangements in PE, school and community sport represent new forms of

governance at a local level? The answer to this second question is more problematic due to the lack of a historical perspective in each of the three case studies. However, comment can be made as to how the collaborative context and NOPES partnerships in each of the three cases related to the characteristics of new forms of governance identified in the literature. It is also possible to examine the extent to which extent the arrangements in the case studies represented the form of modernised governance aspired to by central government.

Only in Northtown can the collaborative context of the NOPES programme be closely identified with the characteristics of new forms of governance as well as the aspirations of central government. The membership of Sport Northtown by representatives of the public, private and voluntary sectors was representative of the range of partners identified by Leach & Percy-Smith (2001), amongst others, in new governance arrangements. Moreover, the inclusion of Sport Northtown within the Local Strategic Partnership was an example of the fit of this organisational structure with central government policy. However, it could be suggested that the arrangements in Northtown were only an embryonic form of new governance. The Sport Northtown partnership remained intimately connected to the local authority. The degree to which agencies from the public sector provided the 'strategic lead' for Sports Northtown, and in particular the sub-group concerned with PE and school sport, went beyond the steering or interest mediation role described in the governance literature (Stoker, 1998, Rhodes, 2000b, Stoker, 2000).

The collaborative context of the NOPES programme in Lonborough and Midcity differed from new forms of governance and central government aspirations in divergent ways. Although there were a variety of key agencies involved in PE, school and community sport in Lonborough from a range of different sectors, the lack of overall co-ordination between these agencies meant that 'joined up' governance was not achieved. Moreover, in this case, evidence suggested that public sector agencies were increasingly taking responsibility for direct delivery of services, a feature at odds with the 'steering rather than rowing' analogy of the role of government in new forms

of governance. In Midcity, the minimal involvement of agencies from outwith the public sector in the network identified in the collaborative context of the NOPES programme did not fit with characteristics of new forms of governance either identified in the theoretical literature or desired by central government.

It is worth noting at this point that, although the differences between arrangements in the case studies and new forms of governance have been demonstrated, this does not mean that partnership and collaborative working was not an approach that was common in the three case studies. Rather, it was the *modes* of governance connected with collaborative working in the Midcity and Lonborough case studies in particular that were found to differ from desired and described new forms of governance. In Lonborough, there was no uniform mode of governance within the context of the NOPES programme with examples of both networked and hierarchical governance identified (the latter highlighted in the previous paragraph). Conversely, in Midcity, a market-orientated mode of governance was present which was not consistent with the normative description of new forms of governance in policy and academic literature. These inconsistencies between normative and empirical accounts of forms and modes of governance will be examined further in the next section.

Given that the collaborative context of the NOPES programme did not significantly resemble new forms of governance in the case studies, it was perhaps unsurprising that neither did the NOPES partnerships in the three case studies. Instead the membership and form of NOPES partnerships either resembled (Northtown and Midcity) or were primarily determined by (Lonborough) the collaborative context in each case. This was a similar finding to Hallgarten & Wading's (2001) and Jones & Bird's (2000) studies of Education Action Zones. Although agencies from the private sector were involved in the NOPES programme in two of the case studies, their role was primarily to enact decisions taken within the NOPES partnerships by staff from public sector agencies. The main counter argument to this analysis is the influence that the availability of external funding had on the selection of

NOPES projects, particularly in Northtown and Midcity. That this influence was not reflected in actual membership of portfolio-level NOPES partnerships raises the question as to whether the influence of agencies from outwith the public sector may not always be identifiable in the membership of partnership bodies. In other studies, theory may be used to analyse the influence of such agencies that is not directly observable. However, in the case of NOPES, additional funding mainly came from the schools and other agencies that hosted NOPES projects and were, therefore, automatically involved in the governance of these projects.

It was primarily at the project level where there were examples of governance arrangements that were new to the agencies, and especially the schools, involved. A number of the partnerships that were instigated had a specific role in the governance of the respective NOPES projects. In one sense the novelty of these partnerships for the agencies involved mirrors the finding of Millbourne et al. (2003) that collaborative approaches are commonly new to schools. However, the formality of the partnerships in the NOPES programme and their governance role differed significantly from types of collaboration examined in the few published studies of school-based partnership and collaboration. As stated before the effectiveness of these governance arrangements was not an aspect that could be fully considered in this study.

Following from the relationship between governmental programmes and technologies in the governmentality literature, the question that follows from the preceding analysis is why new forms of governance were not predominantly found in the case studies? The question of why the collaborative context of the NOPES programme in the case studies did not appear reflective of new forms of governance is one that is somewhat beyond the scope of this study. However, in Section 9.2.2, it was suggested that the governmental technologies available to the Fund were inadequate to ensure desired forms of partnership as these technologies lacked precision to address the complexities of partnership working. Moreover, it could be suggested that the resources provided by NOPES, as a single

programme, were insufficient to change practices and collaborative forms that were already embedded in the context of PE, school and community sport in the case studies.

The issue of the scale of resources is an interesting one and could be identified at project-level, unlike at portfolio-level, as a factor that contributed to newly emerging forms of governance. Certainly, the financial resources provided by NOPES were of a comparatively larger scale at many of the individual NOPES projects than at local authority-level. Furthermore, the fact that at larger projects this funding was predicated on schools opening facilities to the community supported the development of different forms of governance since schools rarely had the capacity to deliver this requirement in isolation. There was a certain level of irony that, although the DCMS Senior Policy Advisor suggested that the tool of funding did a 'lot of good for local authorities', it was at project level that funding was identified as effecting the greatest change in the conduct of agencies in the NOPES programme.

The differences between the three case studies in project-level partnership also highlights interesting features that enable greater understanding of the tools used to promote partnership as a new form of governance. As stated in Section 9.2.4, only in Northtown were new partnership groups established at all the projects included in the case study. This finding reflected, not only the value attached to partnership by key stakeholders at portfolio-level in Northtown, but also the work of the Portfolio Manager in encouraging agencies to contribute to project partnership groups. In this sense, the Portfolio Manager attempted to influence processes in the NOPES programme at project-level. Conversely, key portfolio-level stakeholders in the other two case studies were primarily interested in the inputs (i.e. facilities) provided by NOPES and, to a limited extent in Midcity, the outcomes of the programme. New partnership groups were not as widespread in the NOPES portfolios in these two case studies. This analysis, that it was a process-focused approach that was most effective in the promotion of partnership, is also applicable to NOPES at the national

level. The tools available to the Fund were primarily front-loaded in assessing initial NOPES applications and, to a lesser extent, there was some monitoring of the outputs of the programme. However, the Fund lacked the capacity or resolve to intervene in portfolio-level processes. Again, this may be one reason why NOPES did not contribute to changing working practices or approaches to governance at portfolio-level.

The policy implications of this analysis for promotion of partnership as a new form of governance at local level are significant and add to those made previously by authors such as Davies (2005), Sullivan et al. (2006) and Powell & Dowling (2006). Three policy implications are particularly apparent. Firstly, any intervention to promote partnership, or perhaps changes in practices more generally, should be accompanied by financial and human resources of a scale concomitant with the change desired. It could also be suggested that single programmes in isolation, such as NOPES, may always struggle to provide sufficient resources to enact widespread change. Secondly, the provision of resources, as an input, may be insufficient to promote partnership working, as a process. However, a requirement to deliver outputs or outcomes which require collaboration may encourage the development of relationships between agencies. Whether these relationships are effective in achieving desired outputs or outcomes is another matter that links to Damgaard's (2006) comment that, although the creation of policy networks can be mandated, their achievement of the governance aspirations that are implicit in their creation may remain unfulfilled. In the case of the NOPES programme, the lack of specificity on the part of the Fund regarding their aspirations for partnerships in particular may have hindered the development of local partnerships that could enable the outcomes of the programme to be delivered. This analysis links to the final and summative policy implication, namely the need for more multi-faceted tools to promote partnership working. The preceding analysis has demonstrated that the singular tool of funding, together with a front-loaded application process, was inadequate to effectively promote partnership as a desired form of conduct. To do so may, therefore, require funding mechanisms to be combined with other tools. However, whether the Fund,

as a non-departmental public body, would ever have a wider and more nuanced array of technologies to promote certain types of conduct with local authorities is unlikely.

9.4.2 Relationship between partnership and collaboration

The second main issue that emerges from this study is the relationship between partnership and collaboration, both in definitional and practical terms. There are no commonly accepted definitions of partnership and collaboration that effectively differentiate or identify similarities between the two. This lack of definitional clarity is reflected by the differences identified in Chapter Three in the ways that the terms have been used in academic studies. Furthermore, in policy terms, definitional issues regarding partnership and collaboration are largely ignored. The term partnership is the one that predominates and is commonly used in relation to formal relationships between various agencies (for example, Local Strategic Partnerships). Alternatively, partnerships are also proposed as a productive mechanism through which the potential benefits of collaborative action identified by Huxham & Vangen (2005) are to be delivered.

Although care has been taken in the use of the terms partnership and collaboration in this thesis, the lack of clarity inherent in wider discourses was also prevalent in the NOPES programme. As with wider policy, partnership was the term most commonly used in documents for the NOPES produced by the Fund (for example, NOF, 2001). However, the Fund did not have a position as to the degree of formalisation of these ‘partnerships’. Primarily affecting the project-level, the formal aspiration that NOPES would lead to ‘improved collaboration, co-operation and partnership between schools and between schools and their communities’ could be criticised for conflating an outcome with the mechanisms used to achieve outcomes.

These issues were reflected in the empirical findings from the case studies. At portfolio-level, the NOPES partnership in Northtown had a role in the initial selection of projects, overseeing the construction of projects and,

subsequently, ensuring projects delivered the desired outcomes. Thus, this partnership could be suggested as having both governance and productive roles. However, after projects opened, whether the input of portfolio-level stakeholders could be recognised as either steering or capacity building may depend on the specific analytical position adopted. Similar portfolio-level partnerships in Midcity and Lonborough limited their roles to the first two governance-related processes of project selection and construction undertaken in Northtown. The complexities of the relationship between partnership, collaboration, governance and social production at project-level have already been identified in the final paragraph of Section 9.3.3.

The distinction between the two schools of power literature may begin to offer an alternative perspective that could help clarify the definitional and practical confusion regarding partnership and collaboration identified above. The differences between the schools of literature that focus on ‘power to’ and ‘power over’ were discussed in Chapter Three. The claims made about, and aspirations for, partnership and collaboration cover both of these types of power. Issues with regard to each form of power will be discussed in turn. In this discussion alone, the term partnership will be taken to mean more formal arrangements while collaboration will be used to identify more informal arrangements.

Firstly, ‘power over’ has clear parallels with the governance function assigned to particular partnerships. The zero-sum nature of ‘power over’ (Goehler, 2000) is reflected in the increased power gained by members of partnerships that have a governance role. Moreover, as shall be examined further in the next subsection, the decisions taken within these types of partnerships may be analysed using the frameworks offered by the different dimensions of power described by Lukes (1974) and others. Finally, the term partnership has been deliberately used in this discussion of ‘power over’ as, in the NOPES programme, this type of power was apparent only in the more formal arrangements between agencies both at project- and portfolio-level. Similarly, in the wider context of government policy as briefly highlighted above, the expected role of formalised partnerships is often one

that involves the exercise of ‘power over’. It should be recognised, however, that this analysis does not necessarily preclude the possibility that more informal collaborative arrangements may exercise ‘power over’.

Literature on ‘power to’ has stronger associations with the concept of collaborative advantage. Both ‘power to’ and collaborative advantage literatures explain how collectively agencies can develop a mutual capacity to achieve positive outcomes. In this way, both represent positive-sum concepts. Interestingly, in the case studies, both formal partnerships and more informal collaborative relationships were associated with a positive-sum approach to achievement of desired outcomes. A positive-sum approach underpinned the operation of partnership and collaborative relationships across the Northtown case study which encompassed both formal and informal arrangements. The formalised portfolio-level NOPES partnerships in the other two case studies did not have a productive focus on the achievement of desired outcomes and it was informal relationships between agencies that were more commonly identified as being important to the productive development of individual projects.

These differences emphasise that generalities cannot be drawn from the limited number of cases that comprise this study. Furthermore, it is not suggested that partnerships and collaborations must have a purpose connected to either ‘power to’ or ‘power over’. The example of the NOPES partnership in Northtown suggests that aspects of both these purposes can be addressed by a single partnership. Moreover, co-ordination and avoidance of duplication are suggested as alternative rationales for partnership and collaboration (Diamond, 2006). These rationales were little evidenced in the NOPES programme and only strongly identified in the collaborative context in Lonborough. Where such a rationale could be located in the divide between ‘power to’ and ‘power over’ is unclear.

Despite these qualifications, what this study does begin to suggest is that the capacity to exercise ‘power over’ and adopt a governance function may require a degree of formalisation of relationships between agencies.

Furthermore, the case studies illustrate that the boundary between formal partnerships and more informal collaborative relationships is not one that can be clearly defined in terms of the purpose of these arrangements. Moreover, it is possible that informal collaborative relationships may exist within more formal partnerships and vice versa. However, what the case studies do show is that it is important to understand the purpose of, or rationale for, partnership and collaboration and the type of power required to achieve this purpose. This theme will be further developed in the next subsection and also in Section 9.5 which will examine implications for theoretical development and future research.

Before going on to consider these further implications, it is worthwhile to briefly consider the policy implications of the preceding analysis. As stated at the outset of this subsection, government policy has not clearly differentiated between the potentially different purposes of partnership and collaboration identified with the ‘power over’ and ‘power to’ schools of literature. What is apparent from the NOPES cases studies was that, by mandating the creation of NOPES partnerships and providing the resource of NOPES funding, power was provided to allow portfolio-level partnerships to make governance decisions on the selection of projects in each case. The fact that the selection of projects was not effectively challenged, even in scrutiny forums, suggests that this level of power was sufficient to enact policy decisions. Conversely, ‘power to’ achieve particular outcomes, primarily at individual projects, required the existence of other resources that could be combined with the physical resource provided by NOPES facilities. If government policy focused on the promotion of partnership and collaboration is to become more nuanced (as suggested in the previous subsection), then it has to explicitly recognise the different rationales for partnership and collaboration. The resources required to fulfil these desired rationales will be examined further in the following subsection.

9.4.3 Effect of Partnership and Collaboration

The focus of this subsection is on the way in which partnerships and collaborations both affect the decisions made within them (connected with 'power over') and contribute to the achievement of outcomes (connected with 'power to'). As noted previously, it was beyond the scope of this study to assess whether partnerships and collaborations were effective in their prescribed roles in the case studies. It could be suggested that doing so is inherently methodologically challenging particularly for a study adopting an ontology and epistemology based on critical realism. This difficulty perhaps explains why studies of partnership have typically focused on issues relating to perceived democratic and accountability deficiencies rather than the effectiveness of these arrangements (Ling, 2000). This weakness of the literature also reflects the lack of clarity in policy and theoretical terms on the purpose of partnership and collaboration, as identified in the previous subsection. However, this subsection addresses these weaknesses by identifying characteristics of partnership and collaboration that may constrain or enable these arrangements to be effective. The subsection is structured around the different rationales identified for partnership in the last subsection.

With regard to their governance or 'power over' role, the analysis presented in Section 9.3 demonstrates that the partnerships in the three case studies did affect the decision making processes enacted and, as a result, the composition of NOPES portfolios. However, the effect of partnerships was not uniform in the three case studies. The balance between the respective influence of the strategic context and the agents within this context differed in each case. Furthermore, there were differences in the relative influence of the structure of partnerships and structural features of the collaborative context. Although generalisations from three case studies should be treated with some caution, it was apparent that the freedom of agencies in the selection process was, in part, determined by the extent to which previous policy decisions made by key stakeholders had created a constraining structural context. For example, in the Lonborough case study, where there

had been little strategic consideration of PE, school and community sport, there was significant evidence of freedom for education-focused members of the NOPES partnership and individual schools to influence the selection process. This feature mirrors the influence of strategic action on the strategically selective context described by Hay (1995) in the strategic-relational approach to structure and agency (see Chapter Four).

An analysis of the correspondence between policy decisions made within NOPES partnerships and different dimensions of power is also informative. The use of application criteria to assess bids from potential projects and the application of scrutiny procedures to the resultant portfolios in Northtown and Midcity can be identified as an attempt to demonstrate that the exercise of power in NOPES partnerships was in accordance with the first dimension of power, that is by showing that processes were visible and open. Conversely in Lonborough, some partnership members were disappointed that aspects of a selection process concomitant with the first dimension of power, namely the influence of lobbying by individual schools, impeded any attempts to make a strategic selection of projects within the NOPES partnership.

In identifying less visible aspects of the use of power, in particular those associated with second and third dimensions, Lukes (2005) suggests that the influence of unobservable factors on decisions can be partly identified by analysis of the results of the decisions. At one level, an examination of the general composition of the NOPES portfolios fits the analysis of the influence of partnerships and the wider collaborative context on the selection of projects presented previously in this chapter. So, for example, the composition of the NOPES portfolios in Northtown and Midcity, which were made up of predominately large-scale projects based at secondary schools, were reflective of the more top-down policy processes in these case studies based upon the vision of partnership members. Alternatively, the larger number of projects selected in Lonborough, and the diversity of schools and other locations chosen for them, reflected the more pluralistic selection process in this case. As identified earlier, the differences in the

relative balance of power within partnerships was also evident in the degree to which there was a balance between school and community-focused projects in the NOPES portfolios in the three case studies.

However, there was evidence that hinted at power being exercised more covertly within, through and by NOPES partnerships. This evidence was commonly connected to the selection of particular projects rather than the composition of the whole NOPES portfolio. For example, interviewees in Northtown described the influence of a local business and local councillors on the selection of one particular, large primary school-based project. Whether the influence of these agencies was explicit within the NOPES partnership itself was unclear. In the same case study, the inclusion of a project that provided playground improvements at a number of primary schools could be recognised as a covert exercise of power by the entire NOPES partnership through being an example of a 'selective incentive', identified by Stone (1993) in his studies of regimes, that is used to placate any potential challenges to the dominant coalition of interests. Certainly from a perspective external to the NOPES partnership, these two examples could be most closely identified with the exercise of the second dimension power in which policy options are narrowed in a more covert manner.

Also linked with the exercise of the second dimension power, there was also evidence of a number of non-decisions within NOPES partnerships. The example of the discontinuation of the NOPES partnership in Lonborough, despite two of its members commenting on a possible future role for it, was perhaps the clearest example of options being constrained within partnerships, in this case by Education Department asset management staff. However, the empirical evidence for other suggested non-decisions in the case studies was less clear. Although empirical verification of the exercise of the second and third dimensions of power is inherently difficult, it could be suggested that the nature of partnerships make this type of identification even more difficult.

However, one final piece of evidence suggests that aspects at the cusp of the second and third dimensions of power may have affected NOPES portfolios. In Midcity, it was evident that the influence of the Head of Sport ensured that the NOPES portfolio either enhanced, or at least did not negatively affect, the interests of the Sports Services Section. Actions to ensure this were most evident post-opening. Moreover, it could also be speculated that the selection of some projects, in particular the tennis centre and the facility at Fairhurst College, was also in line with the strategic interests of the Head of Sport. Again from an external perspective, the way in which power was exercised within the NOPES partnership to achieve these ends was obscured. However, at a broader level, it is suggested that the Head of Sport's input into the NOPES decision making process was influenced by the market-based mode of co-ordination that was dominant in Midcity. In turn, the argument could be made that this dominant approach obscured the broader interests of sport in Midcity. Such an analysis is consistent with Lukes' third dimension of power.

With regard to the alternative perspective on power, it was only in Northtown that the portfolio-level NOPES partnership adopted a holistic approach to ensuring there was sufficient 'power to' to achieve desired outcomes at all projects in their NOPES portfolio. Alternatively, in Midcity, the Sports Services Section contributed resources that enhanced 'power to' only at those projects where it was in its strategic interests to do so. Furthermore, this input appeared to be provided independently of the portfolio-level NOPES partnership. In Lonborough, the discontinuation of the NOPES partnership group and the lack of an integrated network that considered PE, school and community sport meant that portfolio-level support for the development of 'power to' at individual projects could be characterised as piecemeal. This analysis suggests that, while it is possible for local authorities to support the development of 'power to' within organisations for which they are responsible, in the NOPES programme this was by no means universal. Instead, the provision of support for achieving outcomes at specific projects could be identified as a consequence of the value attached to partnership in the wider collaborative context, specific decisions made

within and outwith NOPES partnerships and also, perhaps, the lack of clarity from the Fund regarding the longer-term role of these partnerships.

With regard to the achievement of desired outcomes at individual projects ('power to'), a number of factors that enhanced or constrained partnership and collaboration were identified in Section 9.2.4. Included in these factors were the availability of human, capital and financial resources as well as the skill to utilise these resources in collaborative relationships. Although the resemblance of these features to those discussed in the literature on collaborative advantage has already been noted, there is also strong similarity with the literature on regimes which stressed the need for sufficient resources in order to fulfil their particular social production purpose (Stone, 1993). It is important to note that these factors were mainly related to the agencies involved in collaboration rather than the structural features of the specific relationships between them. Two related reasons could be given for this. Firstly, given the common lack of a history of collaborative working, the structural context at individual projects was not as ingrained as at portfolio-level and, therefore, did not constrain the actions of agencies to the same extent. Secondly, it may be that the agential resources required to generate 'power to' may be more easily empirically identified than other factors that enhance this type of power.

The prominence of agential factors at individual projects does not mean that contextual features did not influence collaborative 'power to'. Rather it was the features of the wider structural context, not the form of specific partnerships and collaborations at individual projects, that was important. For example, the market-based collaborative context across Midcity impeded the capacity of some projects to work collaboratively to achieve outcomes. Conversely, as stated previously regarding Northtown, the wider value placed on partnership and collaboration as a socially productive mechanism contributed to ensuring that agencies at project-level had sufficient resources to generate local 'power to' through partnership and collaboration. Although these structural features were identified in the case studies as affecting the contribution that partnership and collaboration could

make to the achievement of desired outcomes, the literature on collaborative advantage is more focused on agency than structure. Other concepts identified in Chapter Three as having utility in examining partnership and collaboration also add little to structural explanations of the generation of collaborative 'power to'. Again, the next section will include further consideration of this theoretical issue.

The preceding analysis also has a number of implications for future policy at a variety of levels. The NOPES programme was one for which a set of desired outcomes were clearly identified by the Fund at the outset. The Fund clearly believed that partnership and collaboration was important to the achievement of these outcomes. At a local level, both the decisions made within NOPES partnerships regarding the selection of projects and the 'power to' within collaborative relationships at individual projects affected the capacity to achieve the desired outcomes. As with the call in the last subsection for more nuanced policy that recognises the different roles and rationales of partnership and collaboration, so future policy development should recognise the constraints on, and the resources required for, local partnerships to fulfil these specific rationales. For example, in the NOPES programme it could be suggested that the Fund did not appreciate the local, contextual influences on NOPES partnerships in making their initial selection of projects. One demonstration of this was that the NOPES partnerships in the case studies did not make these decisions in the way that the Fund expected or desired. Furthermore, the provision of support to ensure that projects had sufficient collaborative 'power to' achieve NOPES outcomes did not appear to be considered in a holistic way across the entire programme. Although the NOPES facilities were, in themselves, a resource that contributed to collaborative 'power to', decisions on the provision of NOPES revenue-funding support were entirely left to portfolio-level NOPES partnerships which were, as stated above, subject to conditions that the Fund did not anticipate. The implications of this analysis for future policy and specific programmes is that they need to be based on a deeper understanding of the local factors that affect the capability of partnerships and collaborations to fulfil their specific, desired purpose. More directive

intervention may be required where it is considered that the capacity of partnerships and collaborations, or the issues that affect them, are not conducive to the achievement of desired outcomes of specific policies and programmes.

9.5 Implications for Theoretical Development and Future Research

In this section, the utility of the theoretical concepts identified in Chapter Three for the study of partnership and collaboration will be examined. In doing so, comment will be made as to how these theoretical concepts could be developed to further their utility. The first two subsections will follow the structure of Chapter Three, considering first analytic concepts relevant to partnership and collaboration and, subsequently, the specific concepts of policy networks, regimes theory and collaborative advantage. The section will conclude with issues for future research on partnership and collaboration, based on the findings and limitations of this study.

9.5.1 Analytic Concepts

The preceding sections demonstrate that the theoretical concepts of power and governmentality both have utility in examining policy and practice related to partnership and collaboration. As suggested in Section 9.4.1, it can be identified that the distinction in the governmentality literature between political rationalities and governmental programmes is one that is replicated in the Blair government's focus on modernisation and partnership respectively. Therefore, the use of the concept of governmentality enhanced the analysis of linkages between the Fund's (and central government's) policy approach to partnership and identified practice in the three case studies. Adopting a theoretical approach based on governmentality may, therefore, significantly benefit research which seeks to examine local responses to government policies and programmes that promote partnership working.

However, what the analysis also demonstrated was that the tools available to the Fund to promote local partnership and collaboration in line with the expectations of national stakeholders were inadequate. This analysis suggests a weakness in the governmentality literature. This literature is mainly based on a positive contention that conduct can be moulded consistent with political rationalities and governmental programmes through the application of particular technologies. What appears not to be addressed in the governmentality literature is the converse, namely why the application of specific technologies may fail to change the conduct of particular agencies or subjects.

Two aspects identified in this study may support the development of the theory to address the potential failure of governmentality mechanisms. The first of these aspects was identified in Section 9.4.1 which examined the different tools used at portfolio-level in the three case studies to promote partnership at project-level. The distinction between the efficacy of tools that addressed inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes is one that, with further empirical examination, could be potentially applied to governmental technologies. The finding that new partnerships were developed at projects where prescribed outputs and outcomes necessitated collaborative working adds weight to the avenue suggested for development of governmentality theory.

The development of partnership at project-level due to the need for schools to engage with their local communities also highlights the second aspect which may be productive in understanding the failure of governmentality mechanisms. Whilst it appeared that there was an understanding amongst those governing the NOPES programme nationally that opening schools for community use was commonly a new challenge at a project-level, it can be argued that these stakeholders' knowledge of the context of the NOPES programme at portfolio-level was limited. Therefore, it could be suggested that the Fund had an imperfect understanding and analysis of the 'governable space' in which partnership and collaboration was to be promoted. Further studies which identify failure of governmentality

mechanisms may, therefore, be advised to examine the knowledge of government stakeholders regarding the 'governable space' within which they wish to mould the conduct of particular subjects.

Analyses that have utilised theories of power have, both implicitly and explicitly, underpinned the discussion of findings throughout this chapter. Theories of power can be applied to partnership and collaboration in a number of different ways. Firstly, theories of power can be used to analyse the membership and form of partnerships or collaborations. For example, in Northtown and Midcity, NOPES partnerships were found to resemble the already dominant interests in PE, school and community sport in each of these cases. Secondly, it has been shown that the operation of partnerships have been affected by the application of external power. In Lonborough, for example, the operation of the NOPES partnership was significantly influenced by the employment of a Portfolio Manager from the private sector, a decision which in turn could be mainly attributed to the exertion of central government powers which required the functions of the LEA to be outsourced.

Thirdly, theories of power have been utilised in the analysis of decisions taken within NOPES partnerships. This type of analysis has been most explicitly outlined in this chapter but is also, potentially, the most problematical. Authors such as Goverde et al. (2000) highlight challenges implicit in empirical examination of the exercise of second and third dimensional power. It was suggested in Section 9.4.3 that aspects of these dimensions of power were potentially evident in the decisions taken by NOPES partnerships. However, the evidence supporting these analyses was often not strong. Part of the reason for the weakness of these inferences was due to the external position of the researcher. More generally, however, this highlights the inherent difficulty in studying the utilisation of power within the commonly closed structures of partnerships. In turn, this difficulty reinforces the criticisms of Geddes (2006) and others regarding partnerships' lack of accountability and democratic control.

A fourth application of literature on power within this study is more theoretically related. It has been suggested that the alternate concepts of ‘power over’ and ‘power to’ may offer an insight through which the purpose of partnerships and collaborations can be examined. As was noted in Section 9.4.2, the applicability and consequences of such an approach could not be fully determined within the confines of this study alone. However, it is suggested that further theoretical and empirical consideration be given to how different conceptions of power could be used to address the significant weakness in existing theoretical and policy approaches to partnership and collaboration regarding the purpose of these mechanisms.

The distinction between the alternative ‘power to’ and ‘power over’ purposes of partnerships and collaborations raises one further issue which intersects with the application of the concept of governmentality. The argument has been made that the promotion of partnership fits with an attempt to mould the conduct of agencies in line with the broader modernisation agenda. However, the ultimate end of this governmental programme remains unclear from government policy and rhetoric. Examined from alternative perspectives on power, the purpose of the modernisation agenda, and the promotion of partnership, could be to enhance the capacity of the state to deliver particular outcomes (‘power to’) or to increase levels of control over society (‘power over’). Future analyses of partnership and collaboration should be examined from this perspective and the motives behind the governmental programme of modernisation requires further interrogation.

Compared to power and governmentality, the use of concepts of governance and modes of co-ordination in this study, and their applicability to partnership and collaboration more generally, is more problematic. In the most general sense, this could be linked to the more diffuse nature of the literature on these concepts. The literature on new forms of governance is located within a wider field in which a number of different perspectives can be identified. Moreover, literature on new forms of governance is primarily descriptive. As such, the concept may have little analytical applicability to the study of partnership and collaboration. Instead, it is perhaps what

studies of partnership and collaboration reveal about the supposed shift to new forms of governance that is more significant. The case studies indicate that partnerships do not automatically represent new forms of governance. This analysis in turn begins to raise some interesting questions and issues. Firstly, what conditions are necessary for partnerships to be representative of new forms of governance? This question becomes more pertinent in the context of PE, school and community sport. In the case studies, the local contexts of PE, school and community sport were, in the main, dominated by public sector agencies. The reasons for this dominance were not clear but it could be suggested that they were connected to the lack of profile of PE, school and community sport as an important local issue within both the public and private sectors as well as the apparent lack of organisations locally representing voluntary sector agencies, such as sports clubs. These features, in turn, raise the question as to whether new forms of governance are likely to exist elsewhere in the local context of PE, school and community sport. These issues require further empirical research in order to be adequately resolved.

The relationship between partnership and different modes of governance and co-ordination remains similarly opaque. Arrangements in the collaborative context of Northtown and Midcity were identified as resembling network and market modes of co-ordination respectively. This finding supports Lowdnes & Skelcher's (1998, p314) position, also quoted in Chapter Three, that 'partnerships are associated with a variety of forms of social co-ordination – including network, hierarchy and market'. However, the previous discussion regarding the purpose of partnership and collaboration again leads to the identification of interesting issues. Representing different theoretical backgrounds, the terms modes of co-ordination and governance have both been used in literature that distinguishes between markets, hierarchies and networks. At a somewhat superficial level, the terms co-ordination and governance have similarities with the distinction between the potential 'power to' and 'power over' purposes of partnership and collaboration respectively. However, a more in-depth analysis illustrates potential inconsistencies. For example, how would

a network mode of governance, with its connotations of ‘power over’, fit with the assumption that network arrangements are positive-sum and provide mutual benefits (as described by Peters, 1998b)? This problematic issue requires further theoretical and empirical consideration if both the literatures related to modes of co-ordination and governance and power are to be productively and collectively utilised in future studies of partnership and collaboration.

9.5.2 Specific Theories and Concepts related to Partnership and Collaboration

As the concept most utilised in this study, implications for the theoretical development of policy networks are the primary focus of this subsection. Overall, academic interest in policy networks has waned since the start of the 21st century and, as a result, the theoretical development of the concept appears to have stalled since Marsh & Smith proposed their dialectical model of policy networks in 2000. Moreover, the continued lack of a commonly accepted definition of a policy network in part contributes to different understandings of the analytical utility of the concept (as highlighted in Chapter Three). These features underpin many of the following comments resulting from the application of the concept of policy networks to partnership and collaboration in this study. In structuring these comments, this subsection includes implications of this study both for the classification and effect of policy networks in turn. Within this structure, comments on the utility of regime theory and the literature on collaborative advantage and capacity will be integrated where relevant.

The lack of a commonly accepted definition allows the concept of policy networks to be applied to a number of different contexts, perhaps beyond those initially considered by authors who developed the concept. The application of the characteristics of the typology of policy networks developed by Marsh & Rhodes (1992) to the analysis of local partnership and collaboration arrangements in this study demonstrates the widespread utility of the policy networks concept. It was recognised in Section 9.2.1 that,

in doing so, the characteristic of frequency of interaction was stretched to encompass the degree of formality of partnership and collaborative arrangements. In one sense, this could be regarded as concept stretching particularly as some definitions of policy networks have emphasised their informality (Borzel, 1998). From an alternative perspective, this change could merely reflect the natural development of the policy network concept in light of the increased governmental focus on formal partnerships. Taking this line of argument one step further, it could be that Ling's (2000) differentiation of partnerships by the nature of relations within them may be a useful addition to the Marsh & Rhodes' (1992) typology.

In comparing the collaborative contexts in the three case studies in Section 9.2.1, 'purpose' was the major differentiating characteristic added to Marsh & Rhodes' (1992) typology. The importance of this characteristic to the understanding of partnership and collaboration was further evidenced by the analysis presented in Section 9.4.2. The linking of different purposes of partnership and collaboration to different conceptions of power is interesting given the inclusion of power as a defining characteristic in Marsh & Rhodes' (1992) typology. In their typology, power is suggested to vary from a positive-sum game in policy communities to a zero-sum game in issue networks. However, this may be insufficient in isolation to capture accurately the different purposes that underpin partnership and collaboration. In particular, the alternative conceptions of policy networks in the literature, as either sites of interest group mediation or a new form of governance, may not fully capture the productive role that underpins the instigation of many collaborative relationships. It should also be noted that issues of purpose and social production are key features of regime theory and the use of these features in this study was beneficial. Therefore, if the suggestion that the characteristic of purpose has utility in understanding different partnerships and collaborations, then it needs to be similarly included in an enhanced typology of policy networks if this typology is to be applied to these arrangements in the future.

As with the typology of policy networks, the dialectical model of policy networks suggested by Marsh & Smith (2000) appears to have utility in studying partnership and collaboration but it may also require some refinement to enhance this utility. Although it was not a specific aim of this study, the case studies provide evidence to support a number of relationships between variables in the model. For example, one of the key findings common to all three case studies was the relationship between the structure of NOPES partnerships and their structural context. Furthermore, the evidence of the impact of previous policy decisions in Northtown and the learning from the Space for Sports Arts programme in Midcity supported the feedback relationships from policy outcomes to the structural context and actor's learning respectively. However, if the process of selection of NOPES projects is considered in relation to the dialectical model, the analysis presented in Section 9.3 suggests that aspects of the structural context had a more direct impact on the policy process than is suggested in the dialectical model.

This last point is connected to one of the potentially major limitations in the dialectical model that could be identified from the findings of this study. The dialectical model suggests that, although network structure and network interaction are interrelated, they influence policy outcomes directly and independently. What the analysis of NOPES project selection indicates is that the structure and interaction between partnership members not only influenced the ultimate selection of projects but also the process through which this selection was made. Similarly, Hay's (2002) model of the strategic-relational approach has the formulation of strategy within context as an intermediate variable between the strategic actors operating in a strategically selective context and the resulting strategic action. While again noting the difficulties in generalising from the three case studies, this analysis suggests that the relationship between network structure, interaction and policy outcomes is more complex than Marsh & Smith's (2000) model suggests.

Further implications arise from this critique when considered alongside other issues identified in this study. Firstly, what constitutes a policy outcome is not clearly specified by Marsh & Smith (2000). It was briefly commented on in Section 3.3.1 that, when considering policy networks as a governance mechanism, there has been an implicit understanding that policy outcomes represent the resultant policies (i.e. policy outputs) rather than the outcomes of these policies (for example, in Smith's 1992 study of agricultural policy and McLeay's 1998 examination of policing policy). Clarification of this issue may be beneficial as part of any refinement of Marsh & Smith's (2000) dialectical model. This clarification may be particularly pertinent given the theme within this chapter regarding the social production, rather than policy development, purpose that may underpin some partnerships and collaborations.

A further related issue concerns the analytic power of the dialectical model in examining the outcomes (of whatever kind) of partnership and collaboration. It was identified in Section 3.3.1 that Daugbjerg & Marsh (1998) suggest that specific theories could be used in conjunction with the concept of policy networks to explain the influence of actors on the outcomes of such networks. Evidence from the case studies suggested that concepts of collaborative advantage and capacity may have some utility in fulfilling the role envisaged by Daugbjerg & Marsh (1998). This may especially be the case where a social productive, or 'power to', rationale underpins particular partnerships or collaborations. It may be that other theories have greater utility in examining the intricacies of network interaction in those partnerships with a role associated to a greater extent with 'power over'. Again, this suggested conceptual development is one that would benefit from further theoretical and empirical consideration.

9.5.3 Implications for Future Research

This final subsection examines the implications of this study for future research on partnership and collaboration. Throughout this chapter, a number of issues that require further study have been identified. Drawing on these and other issues, this subsection identifies recommendations as to how future research could contribute to both theoretical development and understanding of partnership and collaboration. In policy and practical terms, this is important because of the continued prominence of partnership and collaboration both in general and in the particular context of sport. For example, the emergence of new structures such as County Sports Partnerships and Community Sports Networks demonstrates the importance of understanding the implications of partnership and collaboration in sport. Structures such as these may also provide opportunities to conduct interesting and valuable research.

As highlighted throughout the chapter, the findings of this study lack generalisability due to the limitations of the qualitative, case study approach adopted. Therefore, further research to replicate aspects of this study would be valuable particularly as there is a lack of previous research on partnership and collaboration in the context of sport. In particular, one theme that has been prominent throughout this chapter is the need to understand the intended purpose of partnership and collaboration. Further research is required to ascertain whether the conceptual developments proposed, that utilise different understandings of power, can be used to capture and analyse the different rationales for partnerships and collaborations in practice. Furthermore, analysis and discussion of empirical evidence may also determine the utility of suggested refinements to the concept of policy networks. Also, specifically in the sport field, there is a need to examine other partnership and collaborative arrangements in the light of literature from other fields on new forms of governance and alternative modes of governance and co-ordination.

Limitations of this study and its methodology have also been highlighted throughout this chapter. One particular limitation, with its basis in the use of retrospective interviews, is the lack of detailed data on interaction within partnership and collaboration. In particular, data on the processes behind decisions to select specific projects was unavailable. This limitation is also applicable to a number of studies of partnership in other fields (e.g. Lowdnes & Skelcher, 1998; Davies, 2004). The dual purpose of some interviews with data being used for both this study and the national programme evaluation of the NOPES programme also contributed to this limitation as this constrained data collection to being retrospective and initially limited the depth of some interviews. It is suggested that longitudinal research techniques that include ethnographic elements may allow a greater understanding of the interaction processes which could not be fully described in this study. Accessing structures such as County Sports Partnerships or Community Sports Networks and collecting data through long-term involvement with their members may provide interesting new insights. Data collected in this way may also be used to ascertain, as suggested in the last subsection, whether concepts such as collaborative advantage can be gainfully employed within the broader constructs of the policy networks concept.

The use of concepts such as collaborative advantage may also help to address another limitation of this study, namely the inability to fully analyse the effectiveness of partnership and collaboration. As stated previously in this chapter, this also remains a weakness of the body of literature on partnership and collaboration. In part, this weakness may be attributed to the difficulties attributing causality in any study within the social sciences and especially a study such as this one with an ontology and epistemology based on critical realism (Sayer, 2000). The challenges of attributing causality are especially heightened when examining such complex entities as partnerships and collaborations. However, with the prominence of partnership and collaboration in all spheres of the state and society, this is a weakness that needs to be addressed. It is suggested that the use of a theories of change approach underpinned by appropriate logic models (see,

for example, Connell & Kubisch, 1998; Kellogg Foundation, 2001) may offer a way forward. Such an approach could also include concepts such as collaborative advantage. While not offering the capability to definitively assert causality, the use of such conceptual tools may begin to provide the weight of evidence to justify or effectively critique the government's substantial investment of political, human and financial capital in partnership and collaboration.

9.6 Summary

In policy and practical terms, partnership and collaboration are commonly regarded as relatively unproblematic concepts. Academic authors have alternatively painted an altogether more complex picture of such arrangements. This study has been set against the backdrop of these different viewpoints. This concluding chapter has attempted to set partnership and collaboration in the NOPES programme within wider theoretical and policy discourses as well as identifying implications of the study's findings for stakeholders from both policy and academic backgrounds.

In general, the findings from the three case studies provide further evidence of the complexities of partnership and collaboration at a local level. The collaborative context of the NOPES programme varied across the cases from one in which all key stakeholders adopted an integrated, holistic approach to one characterised both by its divisions and close working relations. As a result, it was these different contexts, rather than the Fund's aspirations, that primarily influenced the partnerships developed for the NOPES programme from portfolio- through to project-level. In turn, both the context and the NOPES partnerships themselves significantly, but in different ways, affected the policy processes and outputs in each of the case studies. These findings are, in themselves, valuable especially when there has been little prior research on partnership and collaboration in PE, school and community sport.

There were a number of implications of these findings both for future policy and academic development. The lack of influence of the Fund over local partnerships suggests that, generally, a more nuanced approach to partnership and collaboration is required in government policy. If it is to continue to promote partnership and collaboration to the extent that it has done in the recent past, government needs to consider the precise purpose of these arrangements more deeply as well as consider how and whether partnership and collaboration are effective in fulfilling different purposes. Given a more nuanced understanding of partnership and collaboration, government would then require improved tools to promote it effectively at a local level. These implications may be as applicable to other policy fields as they are to the context of PE, school and community sport.

The implications of this study for the academic sphere are no less significant. Conceptualisations of new forms of governance and modes of governance and co-ordination require some refinement if they are to be profitably applied to partnership and collaboration. However, the study's main theoretical implications concern the need to adapt the concept of policy networks to make it fully applicable to the modern policy context in which partnership and collaboration are ubiquitous mechanisms. Suggestions have been made as to how typologies that characterise policy networks could be improved as well as how analysis of the effect of these networks could be enhanced. Finally, resulting from themes running throughout the chapter, and the study itself, recommendations for future research on partnership and collaboration have been made. It is only through undertaking further research on partnership and collaboration that a better understanding of these very complex forms can be achieved.

REFERENCES

Adshead, M. (2006) New Modes of Governance and the Irish Case: Finding Evidence for Explanations of Social Partnership. The Economic and Social Review. Vol. 37, No. 3, pp319-342.

Alcock, P. (1997) 'Consolidation or Stagnation? Social Policy under the Major Governments. In M. May, E. Brunsdon & G. Craig (eds.) Social Policy Review 9. London: Social Policy Association.

Anderson, J. (1990) The 'new right', Enterprise Zones and Urban Development Corporations. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research Vol. 14, pp468-489.

Archer, M. (1989) Culture and agency. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Archer, M. (1995) Realist Social Theory: The Morphogenetic Approach. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Archer, M. (1998) Social Theory and the Analysis of Society. In T. May & M. Williams (eds.) Knowing the Social World. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Arendt, H. (1970) On Violence. Harmondsworth: Penguin Press.

Atkinson, R. & Savage, S.P. (1994) The Conservatives and Public Policy. In S.P. Savage, R. Atkinson & L. Robins (eds.) Public Policy in Britain. London: Macmillan.

Audit Commission (1998) A Fruitful Partnership. London: Audit Commission.

Bachrach, P. & Baratz, M.S. (1962) Two faces of power. American Political Science Review. Vol. 56, pp947-952.

Bachrach, P. & Baratz, M.S. (1963) Decisions and nondecisions: an analytical framework. American Political Review. Vol. 57, pp632-642.

Bachrach, P. & Baratz, M.S. (1970) Power & Poverty: Theory and Practice. New York: Oxford University Press.

Ball, M. (1998) School inclusion: the school, family and the community. York: Joseph Rountree Foundation.

Beech, N. & Huxham, C. (2003) Cycles of Identity Formation in Collaboration. International Studies of Management and Organisation. Vol. 33, No. 3, pp28-52.

Best Value Inspection Service (2001) Midcity City Council: Sport Services. London: Audit Commission.

Bevir, M. & Rhodes, R.A.W. (2003) Interpreting British Governance. London: Routledge.

Bentley, A. (1967) The Process of Government. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Bhaskar, R. (1989) Reclaiming Reality. London: Verso.

Börzel, T. A. (1998) Organizing babylon – on the different conceptions of policy networks. Public Administration. Vol. 76, No. 2, pp253-274.

Bovaird, T. & Loffler, E. (2003a) Understanding public management and governance. In T. Bovaird & E. Loffler (eds.) Public Management and Governance. London: Routledge.

Bovaird, T. & Loffler, E. (2003b) The changing context of public policy. In T. Bovaird & E. Loffler (eds.) Public Management and Governance. London: Routledge.

Blackman, T. (1995) Urban Policy in Practice. London: Routledge.

Blaikie, N. (1993) Approaches to Social Enquiry. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bryman, A. (2001) Social Research Methods. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bryman, A. (2004) Social Research Methods 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Broadfoot, P. (2001) Empowerment or performativity? Assessment policy in the late twentieth century. In R. Phillips & J. Furlong (eds.) Education, Reform and the State: twenty five years of politics, policy and practice. London : Routledge Falmer.

Burrell, G. & Morgan, B. (1979) Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis. London: Heinneman.

Cabinet Office (1999) Modernising Government. (Cmnd 4310). London: The Stationary Office.

Cameron Community College (2003) Cameron Community College Sports Hall Plan. Unpublished.

Chair of Governors (2005) NOF – MUGA Project. (Letter)

Chitty, C. (2004) Education Policy in Britain. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Cloke, P., Milbourne, P. & Widdowfield, R. (2000) Partnership and Policy Networks in Rural Local Governance: Homelessness in Taunton. Public Administration Vol. 78, No. 1, pp111–133.

Coaffee, J. (2005) New localism and the management of regeneration. International Journal of Public Sector Management. Vol. 18, No. 2, pp108-113.

Coalter, F., Long, J. & Duffield, B. (ends) (1986) Rational for Public Sector Investment in Leisure. London: Sports Council and Economic and Social research Council.

Coghlan, J.F. with Webb, I. (1990) Sport and British Politics Since 1960. Brighton: Falmer.

Connell, J.P. & Kubisch, A.C. (1998) Applying a theory of change approach to the evaluation of comprehensive community initiatives: Progress, prospects and problems. http://aspeninstitute.org/Programt3.asp?bid=1278 (accessed January 04).

Considine, M. & Lewis, J.M. (1999) Governance at Ground Level: The Frontline Bureaucrat in the Age of Markets and Networks. Public Administration Review. Vol. 59, No. 6, pp457-479.

Crenson, M. A. (1971) The Un-politics of Air Pollution: A Study of Nondecision-making in the Cities. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press.

Dahl, R.A. (1961) Who governs? Democracy and power in an American City. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Dahl, R. A. & Lindblom. C. (1953) Politics, Economics and Welfare. New York: Harper and Row.

Daly, M. (2003) Governance and Social Policy. Journal of Social Policy. Vol. 32, No. 1, pp113-128.

Damgaard, B. (2006) Do policy networks lead to network governing? Public Administration. Vol. 84, No. 3, pp673-691.

Daugbjerg, C. & Marsh, D. (1998) Explaining policy outcomes: integrating the policy network approach with macro-level and micro-level analysis. In D. Marsh (ed.) Comparing Policy Networks. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Davies, J.S. (1997) Developing a Comparative Approach to Urban Regime Theory in the United Kingdom. Paper presented to the Contemporary Political Studies Annual Conference, University of Ulster, Jordanstown.

Davies, J.S. (2002) Urban Regime Theory: A Normative-Empirical Critique. Journal of Urban Affairs Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 1-17.

Davies, J.S. (2004) Conjuncture or Disjuncture? An Institutionalist Analysis of Local Regeneration Partnerships in the UK. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research. Vol. 28, No.3, pp570-85.

Davies, J.S. (2005) Local governance and the dialectics of hierarchy, market and network. Policy Studies. Vol. 26, Nos. 3 / 4, pp311-335.

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (1994) Introduction: Entering the Field of Qualitative Research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln Handbook of Qualitative Research. London: Sage.

Department for Education and Employment (1997) Excellence in School (White Paper). London: HMSO.

Department for Education and Skills (2001) Schools Achieving Success (White Paper). London: HMSO.

Department for Education and Skills (2002) Education and Skills: Delivering Results A Strategy to 2006. London: DfES.

Department for Education and Skills / Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2003) Learning through PE and school sport: A guide to the physical education, school sport and club links strategy. London: DfES / DCMS.

Department for Education and Skills (2003) Every Child Matters. (Cmnd. 5860) London: The Stationary Office.

Department for Education and Skills (2004) Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners: Putting people at the heart of services. London: DfES.

Department for Education and Skills (2005) Extended Schools: Access to opportunities and services for all: A prospectus. London: DfES.

Department of Culture Media and Sport (1997) The People's Lottery. (Cmnd 3709). London: DCMS.

Department of Culture Media and Sport (2000) A Sporting Future for All. London: DCMS.

Department of Culture Media and Sport (2003) National Lottery Funding: Decision Document. London: DCMS.

Department of Culture Media and Sport (2004) The Big Lottery Fund: Position Paper. www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/archive_2004. Accessed 10 June 2005.

Department of Culture Media and Sport / Strategy Unit (2002) Game Plan: a strategy for delivering the Government's sport and physical activity objectives. London: DCMS.

Department of National Heritage (1995) Sport: Raising the Game. London: DNH.

Deleon, R,E, (accessed 2004) Urban Regimes and Identity Politics: Some Theoretical Bridges. Available at: http://bss.sfsu.edu/naff/Diversity/DeLeon%20Draft%20Chapter%20Identity%20and%20Regime.pdf. Accessed: 5th June 2004.

Devine, F. (1995) Qualitative Analysis. In D. Marsh & G. Stoker (eds.) (eds.) Theory and Methods in Political Science. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Diamond, J. (2006) *Au reviour* to partnerships: what's next? International Journal of Public Sector Management. Vol. 19, No. 3, pp278-286.

DiGaetano, A. & Klemanski, J.S. (1993) Urban Regimes in Comparative Perspective: The Politics of Urban Development in Britain. Urban Affairs Quarterly. Vol. 29, No. 1, pp54-83.

Dowding, K. (1991) Rational Choice and Political Power. Aldershot: Elgar.

Dowding, K. (1995) Model or metaphor? A Critical Review of the Policy Network Approach. Political Studies. Vol. 45, No. 1, pp. 136-158.

Dowding, K. (2001) Explaining Urban Regimes. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research. Vol. 25, No. 1, pp. 7-19.

Dowding, K., Dunleavy, P., King, D., Margetts, H. & Rydin, Y. (1999) Regime politics in London local government. Urban Affairs Review. Vol. 34, pp. 515-545.

Dunleavy, P. & O'Leary, B. (1987) Theories of state: the politics of liberal democracy. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Edwards, J. & Deakin, N. (1992) Privatism and Partnership in Urban Regeneration. Public Administration. Vol. 70, pp359-368.

Edwards, J. & Batley, R. (1978) The Politics of Discrimination: An evaluation of the Urban Programme 1967-1977. London: Tavistock.

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989) Building Theories from Case Study Research. *Academy of Management Review.* Vol. 14, No. 4, pp532-550.

Elkin, S.L. (1987) City and regime in the American republic. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Entwhistle, T., Bristow, G., Hines, F., Donaldson, S. & Martin, S. (2007) The Dysfunctions of Markets, Hierarchies and Networks in the Meta-governance of Partnership. Urban Studies. Vol. 44, No. 1, pp63-79.

Evans, G. (1995) The National Lottery: planning for leisure or pay up and play the game? Leisure Studies. Vol. 14, pp225-244.

Evans, M. (2001) Understanding Dialectics in Policy Network Analysis. Political Studies. Vol. 49, pp542-550.

Evans, J., Castle, F., Cooper, D., Glatter, R. & Woods, P.A. (2005) Collaboration: the big new idea for school improvement? Journal of Education Policy. Vol. 20, No. 2, pp223-235.

Fanstein, N.I. & Fanstein, S.S. (1993) Regime strategies, urban resistance and economic forces. In N.I. Fanstein & S.S. Fanstein (eds.) Restructuring the city. New York: Longman.

Fielding & Thomas (2001) Qualitative Interviewing. In N. Gilbert (ed.) Researching Social Life. London: Sage.

Flick, O. (2006) *An introduction to qualitative research.* London: Sage.

Flintoff, A. (2003) The School Sport Co-ordinator Programme: Changing the Role of the Physical Educational Teacher? Sport, Education and Society. Vol. 8, No. 2, pp231-250.

Foley, P. & Martin, S. (2000) A new deal for the community? Public participation in regeneration and local service delivery. Policy & Politics. Vol. 28, No. 4, pp479-491.

Foucault, M. (1978) Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Random House.

Frances, J., Levačić, R., Mitchell, J. & Thomson, G. (2001) Introduction. In G. Thompson, J. Frances, R. Levačić and J. Mitchell (eds.) Markets, Hierarchies & Networks: The Co-ordination of Social Life. London: Sage.

Geddes, M. (2006) Partnerships and the Limits to Local Governance in England: Institutional Analysis and Neoliberalism. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research. Vol. 30, No. 1, pp76-97.

Gewirtz, S., Dickson, M., Power, S. Halpin. D. & Whitty, G. (2005) The deployment of social capital theory in education policy and provision: the case of Education Action Zones in England. British Educational Research Journal. Vol. 31, No. 6, pp651-673.

Giddens, A. (1976) New Rules of Sociological Method. London: Hutchinson.

Goehler, G. (2000) Constitution and Use of Power. In H. Goverde, P.G. Cerny, M. Haugaard, & H. Lentner (eds.) Power in Contemporary Politics: Theories, Practices and Globalizations. London: Sage

Goverde, H., Cerny, P.G., Haugaard, M. & Lentner, H. (2000) General Introduction: Power in Contemporary Politics. In H. Goverde, P.G. Cerny, M. Haugaard, & H. Lentner (eds.) Power in Contemporary Politics: Theories, Practices and Globalizations. London: Sage.

Green, M. (2006) From 'Sport for All' to Not About 'Sport' at All?: Interrogating Sport Policy Interventions in the United Kingdom. European Sport Management Quarterly. Vol. 6, No. 3, pp217-238.

Green, M. & Houlihan, B. (2006) Governmentality, Modernisation and the 'Disciplining' of National Sporting Organisations: Athletics in Australia and the United Kingdom. Sociology of Sport Journal. Vol. 23, No. 1, pp 47-71.

Grix, J. (2002) Introducing Students to the Generic Terminology of Social Research. Politics. Vol. 22, No. 3, pp175-186.

Habermas, J. (1984) The Theory of Communicative Action, Volume I: Reason and the Rationalization of Society. Boston: Beacon Press.

Habermas, J. (1986) Hannah Arendt's Communications Concept of Power. In S. Lukes (ed.) Power. Oxford: Blackwell.

Habermas, J. (1987) The Theory of Communicative Action, Volume II: Lifeworld and System: Critique of Functionalist Reason. Boston: Beacon Press.

Hall, S. (2000) The Way Forward for Regeneration?: Lessons from the Single Regeneration Budget Challenge Fund. Local Government Studies. Vol. 26, No. 1, pp1-14.

Hall, S. & Nevin, B. (1999) Continuity & Change: A Review of English Regeneration Policy in the 1990s. Regional Studies. Vol. 33, No. 5, pp477-491.

Halpin, D., Dickson, M., Power, S., Whitty, G. & Gewirtz, S. (2004) Area-based approaches to educational regeneration. Policy Studies. Vol. 25, No. 2, pp75 – 85.

Haugaard, M. (2000) Power, Ideology and Legitimacy. In H. Goverde, P.G. Cerny, M. Haugaard, & H. Lentner (eds.) Power in Contemporary Politics: Theories, Practices and Globalizations. London: Sage

Harvey, L. (1990) Critical Social Research. London: Unwin Hyman.

Hay, C. (1995) Structure and Agency. In D. Marsh & G. Stoker (eds.) Theory and Methods in Political Science. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Hay, C. (1998) The tangled webs we weave: the discourse, strategy and practice of networking. In D. Marsh (ed.) Comparing Policy Networks. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Hay, C. (2002) Political Analysis: a critical introduction. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Henry, I. (2001) The Politics of Leisure Policy 2nd ed. Houndmills: Palgrave.

Higgins, J. (1981) *States of welfare : comparative analysis in social policy.* Oxford : Blackwell & Robertson.

Hills, J. (1998) Thatcherism, New Labour and the Welfare State. Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion. http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/dps/case/cp/chapter13.pdf. Accessed: 15th July 2004.

Hirst, P. (2002) Quangos and Democratic Government. *Parliamentary Affairs.* Vol. 48, No. 2, pp341-359.

Holloway, I. (2000) Is the British State Hollowing Out? *The Political Quarterly.* Vol. 71, No. 2, pp167-176.

Houlihan, B. (1997) *Sport, policy and politics: A comparative analysis.* London: Routledge.

Houlihan, B. (2000) Sporting excellence, schools and sports development: The politics of crowded policy spaces. European Physical Education Review. Vol. 6, pp171-193.

Houlihan, B. & Green, M. (2006) The changing status of school sport and physical education: explaining policy change. Sport, education and society. Vol. 11, No. 1, pp73-92.

Houlihan, B. & White, A. (2002) The Politics of Sports Development: Development of Sport or Development through Sport. London: Routledge.

Huxham, C. & Vangen, S. (2000) Leadership in the Shaping and Implementation of Collaborative Agendas: How Things Happen in a (Not Quite) Joined Up World. Academy of Management Journal. Vol. 43, No. 6, pp1159-1175.

Huxham, C. & Vangen, S. (2005) Managing to collaborate: the theory and practice of collaborative advantage. Abingdon: Routledge.

Imbroscio, D.L. (1998) Reformulating urban regime theory: The division of labour between state and market reconsidered. Journal of Urban Affairs. Vol. 20, No. 3, pp. 233-248.

Janesick, V.J. (1995) The Dance of Qualitative Research Design: Metaphor, Methodolatry and Meaning. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln Handbook of Qualitative Research. London: Sage.

Jessop, B. (1996) Interpretive Sociology and the Dialectic of Structure and Agency. Theory, Culture & Society, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp119-128.

John, P. (1998) Analysing Public Policy. London: Continuum.

John, P. & Cole, C. (1998) Sociometric mapping techniques and the comparison of policy networks: economic decision making in Northtown and Lille. In D. Marsh (ed.) Comparing Policy Networks. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Johnson, N. (1990) Reconstructing the Welfare State: A Decade of Change 1980 – 1990. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Jones, C. (1996) Property-led Local Economic Development Policies: From Advance Factory to English Partnerships and Strategic Property Investment. Regional Studies. Vol. 30, No. 2, pp200-206.

Jones, K. & Bird, K. (2000) 'Partnership' as Strategy: public-private relations in Education Action Zones. British Educational Research Journal. Vol. 26, No. 4, pp492-506.

Kavanagh, D. & Richards, D. (2001) Departmentalism and Joined-Up Government: Back to the Future? Parliamentary Affairs. Vol. 54, pp1-18.

Kellogg Foundation (2001) Using Logic Models to bring Together Planning, Evaluation & Action Logic Model Development Guide. Michigan: W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

Kickert, W.J.M. & Koppenjan, J.F.M. (1997) Public Management and Network Management: An Overview. In W.J.M. Kickert, E.H. Klijn, & J.F.M. Koppenjan (eds.) Managing Complex Networks: Strategies for the Public Sector. London: Sage.

Keyes, J. (1994) Urban Regeneration. Planning Week. Vol. 2, No. 4, pp14-15.

Laffin, M. (1986) Professionalism and Policy: The Role of Professions in the Centre-Local Government Relations, Aldershot: Gower.

Lawless, P. (1994) Partnership in Urban Regeneration in the UK: The Sheffield Central Area Study. Urban Studies. Vol. 31, No. 8, pp1303 – 1324.

Lawless, P. (2004) Locating and explaining area-based urban initiatives: New Deal for Communities in England. Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy. Vol. 22, No. 3, pp383 – 399.

Leach, R. & Percy-Smith, J. (2001) Local Governance in Britain. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Lewis, P.A. (2002) Agency, Structure and Causality in Political Science: A Comment on Sibeon. Politics. Vol. 22, No. 1, pp17-23.

Lewis, J. (2005) New Labour's Approach to the Voluntary Sector: Independence and the Meaning of Partnership. Social Policy and Society. Vol. 4, No. 2, pp121-131.

Lindsey, I. (2006) Local partnerships in the United Kingdom for the New Opportunities for PE and Sport initiative: A policy network analysis. European Sports Management Quarterly. Vol. 6, No 2, pp167-184.

Ling, T. (2000) Unpacking Partnership: The Case of Health Care. In J. Clarke, S. Gewirtz, & E. McLaughlin (eds.) New Managerialism, New Welfare? London: Sage.

Lister, R. (2001) New Labour: a study in ambiguity from a position of ambivalence. Critical Social Policy Vol. 21, No. 4, pp425-447.

Lonbrough Alliance (2005) Structure. www.[lonborough]alliance.org.uk/structure.htm. Accessed 15th September 2005

Lonborough Council (2001) A Strategy for Sports Development in Lonborough. Unpublished.

Lonborough Council (2003) A Community Strategy for Lonborough 2003 – 2006. Lonborough: Lonborough Council.

Loney, M. (1983) Community Against Government. The British Community Development Project, 1968-78 – a study of Government Incompetence. London: Hienemann Educational Books.

Loughborough Partnership (2005) Evaluation of the New Opportunities for PE and Sport initiative: Year 2 Report. www.nopesevaluation.org.uk Accessed: 18th September 2006.

Lowndes, V. & Skelcher, C. (1998) The dynamics of multi-organisational partnerships: An analysis of changing modes of governance. Public Administration. Vol. 76, No. 2, pp313-333.

Lukes, S. (1974) Power: A Radical View. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lukes, S. (1986) Introduction. In S. Lukes (ed.) Power. Oxford: Blackwell.

Lukes, S. (2005) Power: A Radical View 2nd Ed. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

MacDonald (2001) Using Documents. In G. N. Gilbert (ed.) Researching Social Life. London: Sage

MacKinnon, D. (2000) Managerialism, governmentality and the state: a neo-Foucauldian approach to local economic governance. Political Geography. Vol. 19, pp293-314.

MacKintosh, A. (1992). Partnership: Issues of policy and negotiation. Local Economy. Vol. *7*, pp210-224.

Marcussen, M. & Torfing, J. (2003) Grasping Governance Networks. Centre for Democratic Governance: Working Paper Series No. 5.

Marin, B. & Mayntz, R. (eds.) (1991) Policy Networks: Empirical Evidence and Theoretical Considerations. Frankfurt aM: Campus Verlag.

Markwell, S., Watson, J., Speller, V., Pratt, S., & Younger, T. (2003). The working partnership. London: Health Development Agency.

Marsh, D. (1998a) The development of the policy network approach. In D. Marsh (ed.) Comparing Policy Networks. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Marsh, D. (1998b) The utility and future of policy network analysis. In D. Marsh (ed.) Comparing Policy Networks. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Marsh, D. & Rhodes, R.A.W. (1992) Policy Communities and Issue Networks: Beyond Typology. In D. Marsh & R.A.W. Rhodes (eds.) Policy Networks in British Government. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Marsh, D. & Smith, M. (2000) Understanding Policy Networks: towards a Dialectical Approach. Political Studies Vol. 48, No. 1, pp. 4-21.

Marsh, D. & Smith, M.J. (2001) There is More than One Way to Do Political Science: on Different Ways to Study Political Networks. Political Studies. Vol. 49, pp528-541.

Marsh, D. & Stoker, G. (1995) Conclusions. In D. Marsh & G. Stoker (eds.) Theory and Methods in Political Science. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

May, T. (1993) Social Research issues, methods and process. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Mayo, M. (1982) Community Action Programmes in the early Eighties – What Future? Critical Social Policy. Vol 1, No. 3, pp5-18.

McDonald, I. (2005) Theorising Partnerships: Governance, Communicative Action and Sport Policy. Journal of Social Policy. Vol. 34, No. 4, pp579-600.

McLeay, E. (1998) Policing Policy and policy networks in Britain and New Zealand. In D. Marsh (ed.) Comparing Policy Networks. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Merchant, L. (2003) Instructions not included. Regeneration and Renewal. 9th May 2003, pp22-23.

Midcity City Council (2001) Sports Strategy for Midcity 2001 – 2006. Midcity: Midcity City Council.

Midcity City Council (2006a) Agreement for the management Fairhurst College Sports Hall and Swimming Pool. Midcity: Midcity City Council.

Midcity City Council (2006b) Draft Sports Strategy for Midcity 2006 – 2008. Midcity: Midcity City Council.

Midcity-shire County Council (2003) Sport through Education Annual Review 2002-03. Midcity: Midcity-shire County Council.

Midcity-shire County Council (2004) Sport through Education Annual Review 2003-04. Midcity: Midcity-shire County Council.

Midcity-shire County Council (2005) Sport through Education Annual Review 2004-05. Midcity: Midcity-shire County Council.

Midwinter, E. (1994) The Development of Social Welfare in Britain. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Milbourne, L., Macrae, S., & Maguire, M. (2003). Collaborative solutions or new policy problems: exploring multi-agency partnerships in education and health work. Journal of Education Policy. Vol. 18, pp19-35.

Miller, W.L., Dickson, M. & Stoker, G. (2000) Models of Local Governance. Palgrave: Basingstoke.

Miller, C., & Ahmed, Y. (2000). Collaboration & partnership: an effective response to complexity and fragmentation or solution built on sand? International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy. Vol. 20, No. 5/6, pp1-38.

Moore, P.G. (1997) The Development of the UK National Lottery: 1992-96. Journal of Royal Statistical Society. Vol. 160, No. 2, pp169-185.

Mossberger, K. & Stoker, G. (2001) The Evolution of Urban Regime Theory: The Challenge of Conceptualization. Urban Affairs Review Vol. 36, No. 6, pp. 810-835.

Muschamp, Y., Jamieson, I. and Lauder, H. (1999) Education, Education, Education. In M. Powell (Ed.) New Labour, New Welfare State. Bristol: Policy Press.

Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (2002) Factsheet 8: The Role of Local Strategic Partnerships. Wetherby: Office of Deputy Prime Minister.

Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (2004) Research Report 9: Joint Working in Sport and Neighbourhood Renewal. Wetherby: Office of Deputy Prime Minister.

New Opportunities Fund (2001) Building for the Tomorrow: Our Vision for the New Opportunities for PE and Sport Programme. London: New Opportunities Fund.

Newman, J. (2001) Modernising Governance: New Labour, Policy and Society. Sage: London.

Northtown City Council (undated) New Opportunities for PE and Sport Strategic Project Structure. Unpublished internal document.

Northtown City Council (2003) Northtown Sailing Centre Development Plan. Northtown: Northtown City Council.

Northtown Culture (2002) The Cultural Strategy for Northtown 2002-2007. Northtown: Northtown Cultural Partnership.

Northtown Initiative (1999) Vision for Northtown – A Strategy for Sustainable Development. Northtown: Northtown Initiative.

Northtown Initiative (2004) Sport Northtown: Facilities Task Group: Aims and Terms of References. http://www.Northtowninitiative.org/default.asp?initiativeIdentifier=20031027_424556911&subSectionIdentifier=20031029_321605862&articleIdentifier=20031029_20519436&expand=true. Accessed: 25 October 2005.

Northtown Initiative (undated) Sport Northtown: Network and Board. http://www.Northtowninitiative.org/default.asp?initiativeIdentifier=20031027_424556911&subSectionIdentifier=20031028_9502590&expand=true. Accessed: 25 October 2005.

Oakley, B. & Green, M. (2001) Still playing the game at arm's length? The selective re-investment in British Sport, 1995 –2000. Managing Leisure. Vol. 6, pp74-94.

Office of Public Reform (2002) Reforming our public services: Principles in practice. London: Office of Public Reform

OFSTED (1998) Inspection of Midcity Local Education Authority. London: Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools.

O'Malley, P., Weir, L. & Shearing, C. (1997) Governmentality, criticism, politics. Economy and Society. Vol. 26, No. 4, pp501-517.

Painter, J. & Goodwin, M. (2000) Local Government after Fordism: A Regulationist Perspective in G. Stoker (ed.) The Politics of British Local Governance. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Pareto, V. (1935) The Mind and Society. London: Cape.

Pareto, V. (1966) Sociological Writings. London: Pall Mall.

Parsons, T. (1963) On the concept of political power. Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society. No. 107, pp232-262.

Parsons, D. W. (1995) Public policy: an introduction to the theory and practice of policy analysis. Aldershot: Edward Elgar.

Patton, M. Q. (2002) Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods 3rd ed. London: Sage.

Pawson, R. (2003) Theorizing the Interview. In N. Fielding (ed.) *Interviewing.* London: Sage.

Penney, D. & Evans, J. (1999) Politics, policy and practice in physical education. London: Routledge.

Peters, G. (1998a) Policy networks: myth, metaphor and reality. In D. Marsh (ed.) Comparing Policy Networks. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Peters, G. (1998b) Managing Horizontal Government: The Politics of Co-ordination. Public Administration. Vol. 76, No. 3, pp295-311.

Perri 6 & Peck, E. (2003) "Modernisation": the ten commitments of New Labour's approach to public management? www.hsmc.bham.ac.uk/staff/staffdetails/6p/pdfs/P6%20EP%20New%20Labour%20pub%20mgt%20signature.pdf. Accessed: 20th March 2005.

Phillips, R. (2003) Education policy, comprehensive schooling and devolution in the disUnited Kingdom: an historical 'home international' analysis. Journal of Education Policy. Vol. 18, No. 1, pp1-17.

Pierre, J. (2000) Introduction: Understanding Governance. In J. Pierre (ed.) Debating Governance: Authority, Steering and Democracy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pierre, J. & Peters, B.G. (2000) Governance, Politics and the State. Macmillan: Basingstoke.

Pierre, J. & Stoker, G. (2000) Towards Multi-Level Governance. Developments in British Politics 6. Macmillan: London.

Pinker, R. (1995) Social Welfare and the Thatcher Administration. In P. Bean, J. Ferris & D. Whynes (eds.) In Defence of Welfare. London: Tavistock.

Plant, R. (1985) The very idea of welfare. In P. Bean, J. Ferris & D. Whynes (eds.) In Defence of Welfare. London: Tavistock.

Powell, W. (1991) Neither market or hierarchy: network forms of organisation. In G. Thompson, J. Frances, R. Levacic and J. Mitchell (eds.) Markets, Hierarchies & Networks: The Co-ordination of Social Life. London: Sage.

Powell, M. (2000) New Labour and the third way in British welfare state: a new and distinctive approach? Critical Social Policy. Vol. 20, No. 1, pp39-60.

Powell, M. & Dowling, B. (2006) New Labour's Partnerships: Comparing Conceptual Models with Existing Forms. Social Policy and Society. Vol. 5, No. 2, pp305-314.

Power, S. & Whitty, G. (1999) New Labour's education policy: first, second or third way? Journal of Education Policy. Vol. 14, No. 5, pp535-546.

Prescott, J. (1998) Forward and Introduction. In Modern Local Government: In Touch with the People. (Cmnd 4014) London: Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

Raab, C. D. (1992) Taking networks seriously: Educational policy in Britain. European Journal of Political Research. Vol. 21, No. 1-2, pp69-108.

Raco, M. & Imrie, R. (2000) Governmentality and rights and responsibilities in Urban Policy. Environment and Planning A. Vol. 32, pp2187-2204

Ranade, W. & Hudson, B. (2003) Conceptual issues in inter-agency collaboration. Local Government Studies. Vol. 29, No. 3, pp32-50.

Ravenscroft, N. (1998) The changing regulation of public leisure provision. Leisure Studies. Vol. 17, pp 138-154.

Ravenscroft, N. (2005) Developing the Cultural Agenda: The Socio-spatial Dimensions of the Cultural Strategies in England. Space and Polity. Vol. 9, No. 2, pp149-166.

Rhodes, R.A.W. (1999) Forward. In G. Stoker (ed.) The New Management of British Local Governance. London: Macmillan.

Rhodes, R.A.W. (2000a) The Governance Narrative: Key findings and lessons from the ERSC's Whitehall Programme. London: Public Management and Policy Association.

Rhodes, R.A.W. (2000b) Governance and Public Administration. In J. Pierre (ed.) Debating Governance: Authority, Steering and Democracy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rhodes, R.A.W. & March, D. (1992) Policy Networks in British Politics: A Critique of Existing Approaches In R.A.W. Rhodes & D. March (eds.)

Policy Networks in British Government. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Richards, D. & Smith, M.J. (2002) Governance and Public Policy in the UK. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rose, N. & Miller, P. (1992) Political power beyond the State: problematics of government. British Journal of Sociology. Vol. 43, No. 2, pp173-205.

Rose, N. (1999) Powers of Freedom: Reframing political thought. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rubin, H.J. & Rubin, I.S. (2005) *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data 2nd edition.* London: Sage.

Rummery, K. (2002) Towards a theory of partnerships. In C. Glendinning, M. Powell, & K. Rummery (eds.) Partnerships, New Labour and the Governance of Welfare. Bristol: Polity Press.

Rummery, K. (2006) Partnerships and Collaborative Governance in Welfare: The Citizenship Challenge. Social Policy and Society. Vol. 5, No. 2, pp292-303.

Scharph, F.W. (1993) Positive und negative Koordination in Verhandlungssystemen. In A. Heritier (ed.) Policy-Analyse: Kritik und Neuorientierung. Opladen: Westydeutsche Verlag.

Scott, J. (1990) A Matter of Record: Documentary Sources in Social Research. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Scott, J. (2001) Power. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Seeley, A. (1998) The National Lottery Bill 1997/98. House of Commons Library Research Paper 98/41.

Silverman, D. (2000) Doing Qualitative Research: a practical handbook. London: Sage.

Skelcher, C. (2000) Changing Images of the State: Overloaded, Hollowed out, Congested. Public Policy and Administration. Vol. 15, No. 3, pp 3-19

Skelcher, C., Mathur, N. & Smith, M. (2005) The public governance of collaborative spaces: Discourse, design and democracy. Public Administration. Vol. 83, No. 3, pp573-596.

Smith, M. (1992) The Agricultural Policy Community: Maintaining a Closed Relationship. In D. Marsh & R.A.W. Rhodes (eds.) Policy Networks in British Government. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Smith, M.J. (1993) Pressure, power and policy: state autonomy and policy networks in Britain and the United States. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Smith, T. (2003) 'Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue': Themes of Tony Blair and his Government. Parliamentary Affairs. Vol. 56, pp580-596.

Sparkes, A.C. (1992) The Paradigms Debate: An Extended Review and a Celebration of Difference. In A.C. Sparkes (ed.) Research in Physical Education and Sport: Exploring Alternative Visions. London: Falmer Press.

Sport England (2004) The Framework for Sport in England. Making England an Active and Successful Sporting Nation: The Vision for 2020. London: Sport England.

Sport Northtown (2002) Active Northtown: Sporting City. A Sport & Active Recreation Strategy for Northtown 2002-2006. Northtown: Northtown City Council.

Social Exclusion Unit (1998) Bringing Britain Together: a Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. London: Cabinet Office.

Social Exclusion Unit (1999) Report of Policy Action Team 10: The Contribution of Sport and the Arts. London: Cabinet Office.

Social Exclusion Unit (2001) A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal: Nation Strategy Action Plan. London: Cabinet Office.

Solesbury, W. (1986) The Dilemmas of Inner City Policy. Public Administration. Vol. 64, pp289-400.

Sport England (1999) Investing for our Sporting Future: Sport England Lottery Fund Strategy 1999-2009. London: Sport England.

Sport England (2001) Sport Action Zones: Report on the Establishment of the First 12 Zones. London: Sport England.

Stake, R.E. (1994) Case Studies. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln Handbook of Qualitative Research. London: Sage.

Stewart, M. (1994) Beyond Whitehall and the town hall: the realignment of urban regeneration policy in England. Policy & politics. Vol. 22, pp133-145.

Stoker, G. (1995) Regime theory and urban politics. In D. Judge, G. Stoker & H. Wolman (eds.) Theories of Urban Politics London: Sage.

Stoker, G. (1998) Governance as theory: five propositions. International Social Science Journal. Vol. 155, pp17-28

Stoker, G. (2000) Introduction. In G. Stoker (ed.) The Politics of British Local Governance. Macmillan; Basingstoke.

Stoker, G. & Mossberger, K. (1994) Urban Regime Theory in comparative perspective. Environment and Planning C: Government and Planning., vol. 12, pp. 195.

Stone, C.N. (1993) Urban Regimes and the capacity to govern: A political economy approach Journal of Urban Affairs Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 1-28.

Stone, C.N. (1989) Regime politics: Governing Atlanta 1946 - 1988. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press.

Stone, C.N. (2002) Urban Regimes and Problems of Local Democracy. Paper presented to the ECPR Joint Sessions, Turin, Italy.

Stone, C.N., Orr, M.E & D. Imbroscio (1991) The Reshaping of Urban Leadership in U.S. Cities: A Regime Analysis. In M. Gottdiener & C.G. Pickvance (eds.) Urban Life in Transition 39th edn. London: Sage.

Sullivan, H. & Skelcher, C. (2002) Working Across Boundaries: Collaboration in Public Services. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sullivan, H., Barnes, M. & Matka, E. (2005) Collaborative capacity and strategies in area-based initiatives. Public Administration. Vol. 84, No. 2, pp289-310.

Teisman, G.R. & Klijn, E.H. (2002) Partnership Arrangements: Governmental Rhetoric or Governance Scheme? Public Administration Review. Vol. 62, No. 2, pp197–205.

Tett, L. (2005) Inter-agency partnerships and Integrated Community Schools: a Scottish perspective. Support for Learning. Vol. 20, No. 4, pp157-161.

Tett, L., Munn, P., Blair, A., Kay, H., Martin, I., Martin, J. & Ranson, S. (2001) Collaboration between schools and community education agencies in tackling social exclusion. Research Papers in Education. Vol. 16, No. 1, pp3-21.

Tett, L., Crowther, J., & O'Hara, P. (2003). Collaborative partnerships in community education. Journal of Education Policy. Vol. 18, pp37-51.

Tiesdell, S. & Allmendinger, P. (2001) Neighbourhood regeneration and New Labour's third way. Environment & Planning C: Government and Policy. Vol 19, pp903-926.

Tomlinson, S. (2001) Education in a post-welfare society. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Vangen, S. & Huxham, C. (2003) Enacting Leadership for Collaborative Advantage: Dilemmas of Ideology and Pragmatism in the Activities of Partnership Managers. British Journal of Management. Vol. 14S, pp61-76.

Van Kersbergen, K. & Van Waaden, F. (2004) 'Governance' as a bridge between disciplines: Cross-disciplinary inspiration regarding shifts in governance and problems of governability, accountability and legitimacy. European Journal of Political Research. Vol. 43, pp143-171.

Van Waarden, F. (1992) Dimensions and types of policy networks. European Journal of Political Research. Vol. 21, No. 1-2, pp29-68.

Ward, K. (1996) Rereading Urban Regime Theory: a Sympathetic Critique Geoforum. Vol. 27, No. 4, pp. 427-438.

Ward, K. (1997) Rigourising Regime Theory. Paper presented to the Contemporary Political Studies Annual Conference, University of Ulster, Jordanstown.

Webb, R. & Vulliamy, G. (2001) Joining up the solutions: the rhetoric and practice of inter-agency co-operation. Childhood and Society. Vol. 15, pp215-322.

White, J. (1999) Managing the Lottery: evaluation of the first four years and lessons for local authorities. Managing Leisure. Vol. 4, pp78-93.

Whitehead, M. (2005) The architecture of partnerships: urban communities in the shadow of hierarchy. Policy and Politics. Vol. 35, No. 1, pp3-23.

Wilding, P. (1992) The public sector in the 1980's. In N. Manning & R. Page (eds.) Social Policy Review 4. London: Social Policy Association.

Wilding, P. (1997) The Welfare State and the Conservatives. Political Studies. Vol 45, No. 4, pp 716-726

Williams, F. (2004) What matters is who works: why every child matters to New Labour. Commentary on the DfES Green Paper Every Child Matters. Critical Social Policy. Vol. 24, No. 3, pp406-427.

Wilks-Heeg, S. (1996) Urban Experiments Limited Revisited: Urban Policy Comes Full Circle? Urban Studies. Vol. 33, No. 8, pp1263-1279.

Yin, R. K. (2003) Case Study Research: Design and Methods 3rd ed. London: Sage.

APPENDIX A – SCHEDULE OF INTERVIEWS

The following tables list all interviews that have contributed to this study. Recordings of all these interviews are available if required.

National Interviewees

Date	Type of Interview	Interviewee(s)
22nd April 2005	Interview	Big Lottery Fund Senior Policy Advisor
21st Nov 2005	Interview	DfES PESSCL Project Director
28th Nov 2005	Interview	DCMS Senior Policy Advisor

Northtown Case Study

All interviewees employed by Northtown City Council or Education Northtown except those marked with an asterisk

Date	Type of Interview	Data also used for NOPES evaluation?	Interviewee(s)
10th March 2005	Group Portfolio Interview	Yes	Portfolio Manager, Head of Sports Development, Corporate Initiatives Team Leader, Education Capital Projects Manager, Leisure Consultants Director*
19th July 2005	Group Project Interview – Abbot Primary School	Yes	School Head Teacher, School Chair of Governors, School PE co-ordinator, Portfolio Manager
19th July 2005	Group Project Interview – Babcock High School	Yes	School Head Teacher, School Facilities Manager, School Sports Development Officer, School Site Manager, Youth Services Representative
19th July 2005	Group Project Interview – Northtown Sailing Centre	Yes	Partnership Development Manager, Senior Sports Development Manager, Youth Service Officer.
26th July 2005	Telephone Interview – Abbott Primary School	Yes	Out of School Hours Development Officer

15th Sept 2005	Telephone Interview - Babcock High School	Yes	School Head of PE
15th March 2006	Telephone Interview	No	Area Operations Manager – National PE and Sport Agency*
7th July 2006	Group Project Interview – Babcock High School	Yes	School Head Teacher, School Facilities Manager, School Site Manager
7th July 2006	Group Portfolio Interview	Yes	Portfolio Manager, Head of Sports Development, Education Capital Projects Manager, Leisure Consultants Director*
5th Sept 2006	Telephone Interview - Babcock High School	Yes	School Sport Co-ordinator
5th Sept 2006	Telephone Interview - Babcock High School	Yes	Representative of local football club*
23rd Oct 2006	Telephone Portfolio Interview	No	Healthy Initiatives Team Leader
8th March 2007	Portfolio Interview	No	Head of Sport

Midcity Case Study

All interviewees employed by Midcity City Council except those marked with an asterisk

Date	Type of Interview	Data also used for NOPES evaluation?	Interviewee(s)
5th June 2003	Group Project Interview – Cameron Community College	Yes	School Community Sport Co-ordinator Head Teacher
17th Dec 2003	Project Interview – Cameron Community College	Yes	School Community Sport Co-ordinator
26th Jan 2004	Project Interview – Cameron Community College	Yes	School Head of PE
1st Dec 2004	Group Portfolio Interview	Yes	PE & Sport Strategic Manager, Head of Sport, Education Facilities Development Officer*
22nd Nov 2005	Project Interview - Dalgarno Community College	Yes	School Head of PE
14th Dec 2005	Telephone Project Interview - Dalgarno Community College	Yes	School Business Manager

15th March 2006	Telephone Interview	No	Area Operations Manager – National PE and Sport Agency*
23rd May 2006	Group Project Interview – Eddington High School	Yes	School Business Manager, School Sport Co-ordinator
20th June 2006	Group Portfolio Interview	Yes	PE & Sport Strategic Manager, Head of Sport, Education Facilities Development Officer*
20th June 2006	Group Project Interview – Fairhurst College	Yes	School Deputy Head Teacher, School Head of PE, Sport Services Project Officer
10th July 2006	Portfolio Interview	No	Sports Development Manager (Equity)*
26th July 2006	Portfolio Interview	No	PE & Sports Project Officer*
20th Oct 2006	Portfolio Interview	No	Sports Regeneration Manager
20th Oct 2006	Portfolio Interview	No	Sports Services Manager
11th January 2007	Group Project Interview – Gaffey Boys School	Yes	School Deputy Head Teacher, School Tennis Coach, County Tennis Development Officer*

Lonborough Case Study

All interviewees employed by Lonborough Borough Council except those marked with an asterisk

Date	Type of Interview	Data also used for NOPES evaluation?	Interviewee(s)
22nd July 2004	Portfolio Interview	Yes	Senior Architectural Assistant*
4th March 2005	Portfolio Interview	Yes	Senior School Advisor
4th March 2005	Portfolio Interview	Yes	Sports Development Manager
4th March 2005	Portfolio Interview	Yes	Head of Asset Management
23rd June 2005	Telephone Portfolio Interview	Yes	Community Service Project Officer
1st March 2006	Telephone Portfolio Interview	No	Area Operations Manager – National PE and Sport Agency*
12th Oct 2006	Portfolio Interview	Yes	Senior Architectural Assistant*
7th Nov 2006	Project Interview – Irving Special School	Yes	School Bursar

7th Nov 2006	Project Interview – Jackson Primary School	Yes	Acting Head Teacher
13th Nov 2006	Portfolio & Project Telephone Interview	Yes	Partnership Development Manager
13th Nov 2006	Project Telephone Interview - Irving Special School	Yes	Disability Sports Development Officer
20th Nov 2006	Project Telephone Interview - Irving Special School	Yes	Specialist PE Teacher
21st Nov 2006	Project Telephone Interview – Jackson Primary School	Yes	Head Teacher
5th June 2007	Portfolio Interview	Yes	Sports Development Manager
5th June 2007	Portfolio Interview	Yes	Community Service Project Officer
13th June 2007	Group Portfolio Interview	Yes	Property Services Manager Property Services Officer
13th June 2007	Portfolio Interview	No	Partnership Development Manager
10th July 2007	Portfolio Interview	No	Sports Action Zone Director*

10th July 2007	Group Portfolio Interview	No	Head of Parks and Sports Strategic Development Manager for Sport Community Games Development Manager Development & Improvement Manager (Sports & Physical Activity)

APPENDIX B – SAMPLE INTERVIEW GUIDE

Lonborough Initial Portfolio Interviews
4th March 2005

Section 1. Introductory questions

Note: This section was designed to provide background information for both this study and the NOPES evaluation.

1. Can you tell me your role and responsibility for the NOPES portfolio?

2. How does that fit with your existing role within the local authority?

3. What are your main hopes and aspirations for the NOF portfolio?

Section 2. Partnership Effectiveness

Note: A section on 'Partnership Effectiveness' was part of all NOPES evaluation initial case study interviews. However, the questions were designed according to the focus of the PhD study and understanding gained from both theoretical concepts and the wider policy context. Thus, the data elicited by these questions fulfilled the needs of both the PhD study and the NOPES evaluation.

2.1 Role and operation of portfolio level partnership

1. How would you describe the role of the portfolio steering group in developing the NOPES portfolio?
    - What ongoing role does the NOPES steering group have in supporting projects?

2. How was the NOPES steering group put together?
    - How was the membership of the steering group decided upon?
    - How has the partnership ensured that the right organisations and individuals are involved?
    - What experience do you have of working with other members of the partnership previously?

3. What do the different organisations bring to the steering group?
    - What responsibilities do individual members have?
    - What is the division of responsibility for the programme between the local authority and Const education?

4. How does the partnership make decisions?

5. What is the relationship between the partnership/steering group and individual NOPES projects?

2.2 Partnership and links with other strategic plans

1. How would you describe the steering group's overall vision for the NOF programme?
    - How was this vision developed?

2. How does the NOPES portfolio link in with other strategies and programmes the authority is involved in?
    - E.g. Healthy Schools Partnership, local authority Sports Development Strategy, Sports Action Zone

3. Besides the steering group what other partnerships and collaborations exist at a portfolio level?
    - What are their purpose?
    - How are these managed and developed?

2.3 Choice of projects

1. Could you describe the decision making process involved in the selection of projects?

2. How were decisions made about the revenue funding components of the portfolio?

2.4 Monitoring and evaluation

1. What plans are in place to monitor and evaluate the success of the whole portfolio?

2. Who will be responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the partnership?

3. What do you intend to do with the results of monitoring and evaluation?

2.5 Sustainability

1. What plans have been made to ensure that the impact of NOPES will be sustainable over the long term?

2. What issues are most likely to ensure the future sustainability of impact?

3. What issues are most likely to hinder the future sustainability of impact?

Section 3. Participation

Note: This section was added to the interview schedule primarily for the NOPES evaluation. However, data elicited through these questions was included in the analysis for this study where relevant.

3.1 Portfolio aims and objectives

1. What are the main aims for this portfolio in terms of increasing participation among young people?

2. What are the main aims for this portfolio in terms of increasing participation among the wider community?

3.2 Quantity and quality of PE

1. In what ways is it envisaged that this portfolio will impact on the quantity and quality of PE?

3.3 Extra-curricular activity

1. In what ways is it envisaged that this portfolio will impact on the quantity and quality of extra-curricular activities?

3.4 Impact on Community

1. In what ways is it envisaged that this portfolio will impact on participation amongst the wider community?

3.5 Target groups

1. Which target groups have been identified for this portfolio?

2. How were the target groups identified and why?

3.6 Purpose/Value for Money

1. What processes are in place to ensure the facilities are fit for purpose and represent good value for money?

2. How were members of the local community consulted about the design of facilities?

3.7 Sustainability

1. What plans are in place to ensure that the impact of the portfolio on participation is sustained in the longer term?

Section 4. Wider Social Outcomes

Note: This section was added to the interview schedule primarily for the NOPES evaluation. However, data elicited through these questions was included in the analysis for this study where relevant.

4.1 Aims for the portfolio

1. In what ways is it envisaged that the portfolio will impact on:
   - Higher standards across the whole school?
   - Improved collaboration, co-operation and partnership between schools and their communities?
   - Promotion of social inclusion?

2. Is it envisaged that the portfolio will impact on any other wider social outcomes/behaviour?
   - Health?
   - Citizenship?
   - Other social behaviour (e.g. anti-social behaviour and crime)?

9.1 Sustainability

1. How will this impact be sustainable in the longer term?

4.3 Effective practice

1. Are there any examples of ‘Effective Practice’ within this portfolio?